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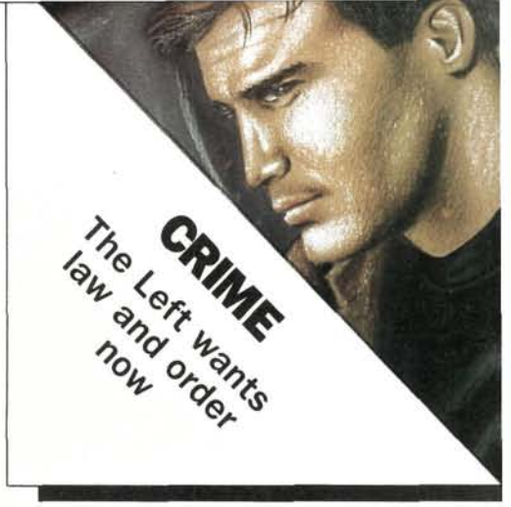

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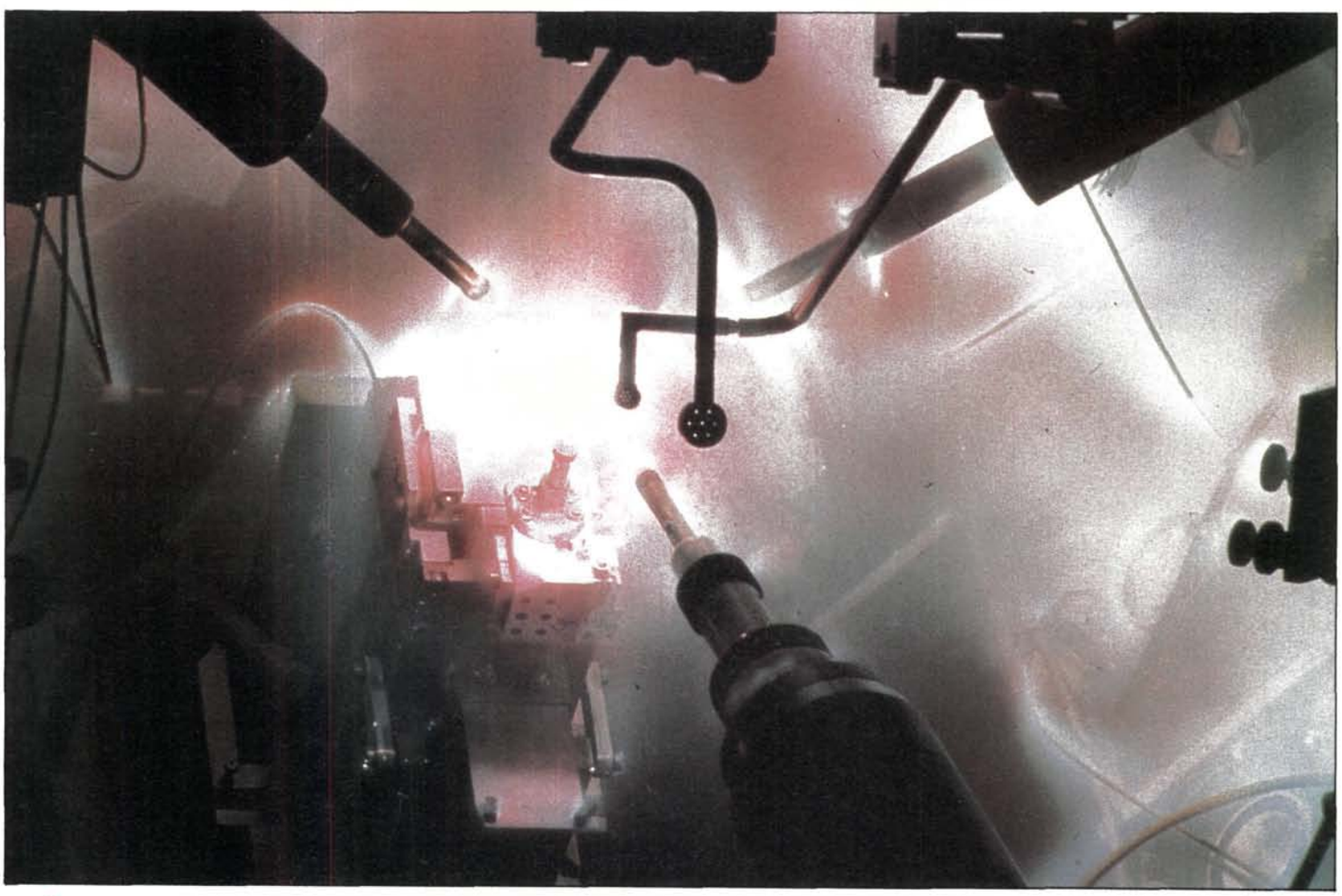

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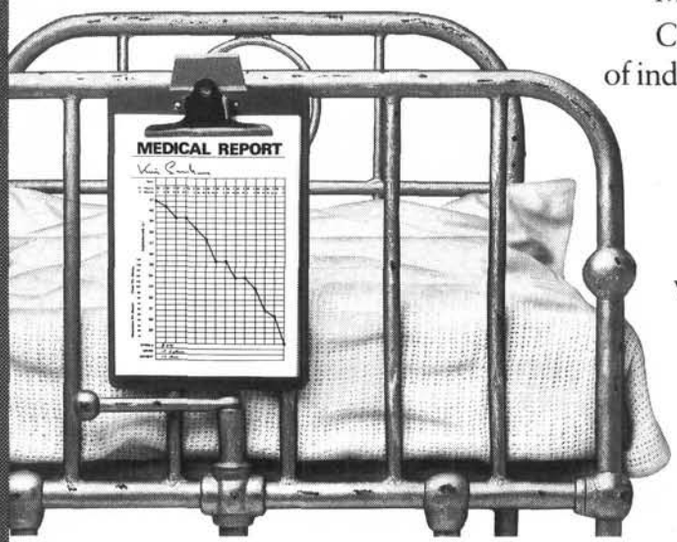

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol 112 No 2904 21 November 1986

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NEXT WEEK

Terrorism now convulses the West — especially France, where both domestic and foreign assassins pursue their victims ruthlessly — and often indiscriminately. AMIR TAHERI, chief editor of *Jeune Afrique*, based in Paris, reports on the modern scourge of governments and people

A malign fantasy

DR RICHARD Garwin is no softie. He played a large role in the development of the US's first hydrogen bomb, and he devised means of testing nuclear weapons. He worked on the air-launched cruise missile and on anti-submarine devices. He served on the Pentagon's Defence Science Board and, for eight years, on the President's Science Advisory Committee, chairing top flight panels on military aircraft, strategic weapons, naval warfare and the military use of space. He has been at the top of the US defence establishment: he is now a fellow at the IBM research centre in New York State.

It carries some weight, then, when he tells the *New Statesman* in an interview (see p8) that the Strategic Defence Initiative — Star Wars — has become 'the Emperor's new clothes'; that it 'cannot serve the goal which the US government advances for it — to protect the US and allies against a Soviet attack'. Further, it has done little to further general technical progress; it could not be tested without 'running World War III'; and is an 'effective weapon aimed at the heart of the 1972 Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty' (which the US will breach if they test SDI).

It is, says Garwin, 'little more than a sham and a face-saving programme for President Reagan (but) may still provoke offensive responses by the Soviets to counter that defence'.

(More of President Reagan's face has been saved by the British Prime Minister at the weekend, when she gave her support to two shams: first, the sham of SDI, and second, the sham that President Reagan is attempting to perpetrate on the American people that he did not sell arms to Iran in return for the release of US hostages. In return, Mrs Thatcher received a promise that she would get the Trident II missiles which she wants to maintain the 'independent' deterrent she judges will be electorally popular when she decides to go to the country.)

Garwin is not the only top level insider who thinks SDI is nuts. Walter Slocombe, who was director of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks task force for President Carter, has said that a system of defence which in the end will only guard missile silos could be replaced by a fraction of the cost by a programme to harden the silos. Jack Ruina, professor of engineering at MIT and an Eisenhower nuclear advisor, has said that the development of a new defence system is bound to stimulate a new Soviet offensive system development, thus ratcheting up the arms race one further notch on the holocaust scale. Even Richard Perle, assistant Secretary of Defense and Gerold Yonas, the SDI chief-scientist, now publicly disagree with President Reagan's and other administration officials' original claim that SDI will be a total shield: the new orthodoxy is that it protects the US's ability to retaliate.

Yet SDI funding is growing: the involvement of European scientists in the SDI programme is increasing; and the chance for significant arms reductions which, six weeks ago, the Reykjavik summit seemed to hold out, are now slipping away into bitter recriminations and fruitless exchanges. At the heart of the failure to agree, as Jeremy Leggett writes in his special report on Star Wars (starting p6), is the US's stubborn adherence to a sham dream.

It is hard to argue with the logic of Dr Alexey Vasiliev, the Soviet SDI expert, whom we also interview in this issue, that the Soviet Union is unable to concede large reductions in weapons when the SDI is being developed. 'While SDI remains, capable of destroying a small number of missiles, how could we negotiate down to that number? The strategic balance would be destroyed'.

One does not have to believe that the Soviet Union is a nation of peacelovers to believe that. One does not have to swallow Soviet adventurism and imperialism to argue that SDI should have no place in the nuclear balance. SDI is one of the most dangerous developments of our time, a clear signal to the Soviet Union that the softer line it is pushing on the international stage will meet no response but the assumpton of weakness, and that the only future is an arms race run to exhaustion — or nuclear war itself.

Instant retaliation

Garwin points to the increased instability which the deployment of SDI would bring: an era of mixed offensive and defensive weapons would, he says, bring 'novel and more dangerous confrontations'. Mistakes would be more likely, instant retaliation to a mistaken signal almost certain.

Even by its apologists' lights, it has not worked. They have said that SDI would frighten the Soviets into a deal, would ultimately make the world a safer place if only we all have the nerve to stick with the bluff. It has not happened, and recent history belies its likelihood. The tremendous Soviet build-up of nuclear missiles in the 1970s assisted in the election of Ronald Reagan, pledged to re-introduce parity: why should the Soviet Union's leadership respond in a different way to *their* likely loss of parity now? Star Wars is a malign fantasy, certain never to deliver what had been advertised for it, but endangering us all. □

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Living with sanctions

Johannesburg

SOUTH AFRICA'S two main black union federations, COSATU and CUSA, have in the past year passed resolutions strongly supporting sanctions. No surprise. But their practical application, particularly with members' jobs on the line, is hard. Government and employers have put on a propaganda squeeze, directly linking sanctions and job losses. Most widely publicised was the Chamber of Mines' claim that if all coal exports were banned, 35 per cent of the sector's 110,000 workers would have to be sacked. The Chamber challenged the National Union of Mineworkers to explain how, in the face of that, it could support sanctions.

The unions have refused to go on the defensive: 'We have reached the point of sanctions because the truth of the matter is that we are governed by an intransigent minority regime,' says Alec Irwin, the education secretary of COSATU. 'No people would freely vote sanctions upon themselves.' They point to an already exceptionally high rate of unemployment — according to one estimate, as much as 50 per cent, or 6m of the economically active population are out of work. This has nothing to do with sanctions but everything to do with the government's political and economic policies.

The unions have decided to fight sanctions-related job losses as they would any cuts. 'We will fight to keep our jobs — whether the losses be through rationalisation, disinvestment or relocation to bantustans,' says one COSATU leader. (Mathey Rustenburg Refiners, half-owned by the British Johnson Mathey Group, has just illustrated the latter form of disinvestment by preparing to move its platinum refinery in Johannesburg to the union-free, low-wage zone of Bophuthatswana.)

With the union movement still gearing up, the sanctions battle took an unexpected turn. General Motors, disinvesting from its Port Elizabeth plants, sold them to South African-based management and prepared to move out while retaining the ability to make money through licensing and franchising arrangements. Members of the National Automobile and Allied Workers' Union (NAAWU) occupied their plants. Initial demands for job security assurances crystallised the dispute into a test case of the responsibility of multinationals who disinvest from South Africa.

Out of the GM dispute has emerged a new set of guidelines for multinational companies disinvesting from South Africa. These include demands that workers be given notice of when a company is pulling out, that the company disclose full details of its plans and that the terms of the withdrawal be negotiated, including job security guarantees. Workers' leaders do not deny that there will be many job losses and that in some cases workers will be dissatisfied with the results. Significantly, however, the debates over sanctions are forcing black workers to see shopfloor issues as part of a wider issue — political power in South Africa.

Now that South Africa has truly entered the era of sanctions and disinvestment, the unions are starting to see hidden benefits. Far from weakening the union movement, the depth of debate and soul-searching which black workers' leaders are undergoing is having a mobilising and strengthening effect, the end of which is likely to be a far more politicised union movement.

Phillip van Niekerk

The will to argue

NEIL KINNOCK would have been shocked by this year's annual Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament conference in Blackpool last weekend. Not by the motion to get rid of all US bases from Britain. CND policy has always been quite clearly different and more radical than that of the Labour Party. He would have been shocked,rather, by the political will to take on the Tories on their own chosen election ground — defence.

Labour Party researcher Mike Gapes and even the ever popular Joan Ruddock, former CND chair, now Labour Party would-be candidate, were grilled in separate sessions by peace activists desperate for some sign that the Labour Party had done some concrete thinking on its defence policy. Though Ms Ruddock was, as usual, precise in her own analysis, she kept insisting 'this is my view of what the Labour Party *should* do — not what it is doing'. Gapes had to ask the audience to be patient till early December when the Labour Party would unveil its defence package with the proper ceremony.

While Labour tries to duck the issue rather than blow apart its fragile consensus, CND is left to struggle over the implications of a non-nuclear defence policy. Conference deliberated over the steps to dismantling a nuclear state. What about Aldermaston; it is needed for decommissioning nuclear weapons, but while its teams and facilities exist, no other power will consider Britian nuclear-free. What would a European-wide foreign policy look like, one that isn't about a third bloc or a Eurobomb? CND obviously didn't have all the answers - but at least it was asking the questions.

CND is a mass movement and should remain independent of all political parties, was the repeated cry. This time round, it will be keeping its distance from the Labour Party in the election. Conference remained puzzled, though, over what positive intervention CND could make when the only 'disarmament party' is looking so flaky.

The basic case has not yet been won, admitted Bruce Kent. Cancelling Trident may be easy, Cruise missiles are unpopular but the public is loathe to let go of Polaris. It's not a lost cause; Bea Campbell, feminist author, estimated that a third of Tory women wanted disarmament but had no means to express that. Yet until the Labour Party emerges confident and convincing, hordes of CND activists talking disarmament on the doorsteps may only serve to highlight Labour's confusion.

That leaves CND distanced from Labour but unresolved about its relationship to the political process. Vice-chair-elect Elena Lieven pointed out; 'CND has to have a strategic view and the tactics to go with it, but that's difficult to achieve without becoming a sort of political party itself'. After this year's conference CND will be trying to be a more flexible and less 'single issue' coalition, geared up to take on any of the issues which touch it from nuclear power to foreign policy generally. It will be walking the difficult tightrope between political sophistication and dissipation of focus.

Jane Dibblin

Knowsley knowlege

THE CLOSE shave in Knowsley North should teach Labour this lesson above all others: that the constituency General Management Committee structure, regarded as sacredly unchangeable (as only something cobbled together in 1919 could be), has to be de-sanctified and *changed*.

As the *NS* has shown, Knowsley North's GMC saw the 65 per cent of individual members being outvoted by a coterie of trade union delegates. As the conscript canvassers from London trudged through Knowsley's housing estates, the ineffectiveness of such a structure became clear. The GMC, constructed to perpetuate the power of a clique, regarded the voters as so much fodder, assured electorate crosses. There was no mechanism for seeing them as members, as initiators of action.

The Liberals had learned that lesson and it showed. But Labour's wars in the past few years have tended to reaffirm the paramount position of the MP, and thus of the parliamentary party — by making the candidate's selection and re-selection the centrepiece of GMC politics.

Some awareness of this was shown at last weekend's annual general meeting of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, the soft left's mobilising body and think tank. Faced with a draft which proposed tightening up on reselection procedures, delegates rejected it, implying while doing so that they were looking for a system which could deliver one member, one vote — thus granting ordinary members the benefit of the doubt that their minds were *not* hopelessly contaminated with capitalist press outpourings.

There will be a temptation to leave the issues behind, along with the smouldering ashes of a few token expellees. But in Knowsley, it leaves the same situation which created the near debacle, and nationally leaves the potential for such disaster. The Liberals have learned the lesson that politics, to be effective, has to be in parliament: but to involve people locally is essential both to get elected to parliament, and to maintain a party organisation. Without the benefit of the fissiparous ideology of Labour, they have solved the problem of what to do between elections in a way more constructive than the Labour answer to pass resolutions.

The *NS* has argued in the past against the mistrust reselection. Knowsley demonstrates the need to examine wider issues, about what branches and constituencies are for, as the inner city vote banks are liquidated by social change and Liberal dawn raids.

Ian Williams

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PETER KELLNER

Neil Kinnock and the quest for user-friendly socialism

'WE ARE ALL Socialists now'. Those confident words first appeared in a Fabian essay by Sir William Harcourt 97 years ago. It is appropriate that a Fabian pamphlet published last week should provide a searching critique of socialism today: searching and, in truth, more than a little discomforting.

The pamphlet is called *Market socialism: whose choice?*. It costs £1.50 and nobody who wishes to contribute to the debate about the future of socialism should say another word until they have read it. The pamphlet is the product of an intensive series of discussions by the Socialist Philosophy Group. Its name suggests something remote and abstract. The substance of their discussions has been anything but. With a rigour and open-mindedness rare in any partisan gathering, the group has effectively tackled the question, Is Socialism Dead?

Their answer boils down to this: something *is* still alive, but evolution has worked some funny tricks. The sickly creature still hanging onto life may answer to the name 'socialism', but it's not what Karl Marx, the Webbs, Bernard Shaw or Herbert Morrison would have recognised as their ideological grandchild.

To reduce a complex historical argument to an absurdly simple level, the authors of the pamphlet take as given that socialism has moved on from a belief that markets should be completely replaced by planned economic decision-making. Markets are here to stay and socialism must adjust to that fact. Markets, however, tend to generate two kinds of inequality: inequality of wealth and inequality of power.

Two fundamental questions flow from those observations: first how much should the scope of markets be limited and the 'commanding heights' of the economy be publicly owned and planned? Second, where markets are allowed to function, what steps should be taken to prevent gross inequalities from arising from the way they operate?

AT A TIME when the immediate imperatives are to win the next election and bring down unemployment, these may seem irrelevant and self-indulgent questions. On the contrary: I believe that Labour's long-term recovery depends on its ability to provide coherent answers.

One of the party's great advantages in its two most successful electoral periods — the mid-1940s and the mid-1960s — was that it seemed to know what its purpose in life was. (I say 'seem' in order not to be distracted by arguments about the objective characteristics of Attlee's and Wilson's programmes.) The Tories, on the other hand, looked like a gang of rudderless opportunists.

For almost a decade now, those roles have been reversed. Mrs Thatcher has painted a clear picture of the kind of society she is seeking to create. She believes in free-market capitalism, consumer choice, an unregulated labour market, and the transfer of public assets to private home-owners and shareholders. Many of us may find that an unattractive vision; but we have to concede its clarity — and the fact that ideological clarity plus Saatchi and Saatchi makes a formidable vote-winning combination.

Since the mid-1970s it has been Labour that has most often given the appearance of being led by rudderless opportunists. Yes, yes, I have read all those policy statements about job creation, and social ownership, and low pay, and trade unionists' rights. Compared with the period leading up to the 1983 election, Labour has a better leadership, better policies and a far better record of putting its case across to voters. But the party still lacks a clear sense of where it is heading — of what kind of socialist society it is striving to create.

Put that point to almost any leading party figure and you will receive one or both of two responses: 'We want to restore full employment or something like it, revive industry, improve our schools and hospitals, raise pensions, eliminate poverty and restore the utilities to public control. That's socialism'. *Or:* 'We want a society where people have more control over their own lives, where equality and freedom march hand in hand, where government is the servant and not the master of people. *That's* socialism'.

> ***'Labour lacks a clear sense of what kind of socialist society it is striving to create'***

All of which is good, laudable and, indeed, ambitious stuff, even if the second answer tends to use words like a vacuum cleaner, sucking all meaning out Labour's ideological furniture. But it has precious little to do with socialism as an ideology or vision.

This absence of a clear political purpose allows two contradictory claims to be made. The far left says Labour's leadership have ruthlessly abandoned socialism and will equally ruthlessly abandon their present policies if they come to power. The right says that Labour's socialism is there all right, but it is such an old, ugly authoritarian creature that it is being kept out of sight until the day Neil Kinnock becomes Prime Minister.

IS KINNOCK's cupboard bare, or does it contain some cantankerous beast waiting to leap out? The answer he, and others, would undoubtedly like to give is that Labour's contemporary socialism is attractive, efficient and user-friendly. The authors of the Fabian pamphlet undoubtedly wish to help him frame that answer. But their rigour and their honesty lead them to some awkward conclusions.

Writing for the majority of the Socialist Philosophy Group, David Miller and Saul Estrin concede what many right-wingers contend: that markets are not merely necessary evils, but have positive advantages: 'Markets are an efficient way of producing and distributing a very large number of mundane items, from tomatoes to transistor radios . . . Markets give their participants a certain kind of freedom. They tend to expand the range of choices that may be made, and they give each person a variety of partners with whom to deal . . . Markets tend to dissolve personal power. Although they certainly place constraints on people's behaviour ("market forces"), they free people from dependence on particular individuals such as petty bureaucrats'.

The Adam Smith Institute could not have put the case better. However, right-wingers are less likely to be comforted by Miller and Estrin's next proposition: that markets in products are fundamentally different from markets in capital and labour.

Decisions in large enterprises on investment and employment need to be based on complex judgments about the future performance of enterprises. 'Thus there is a powerful tendency for these decisions to gravitate in practice into the hands of experts who are able to spend time acquiring the necessary information, and so control of capital passes effectively into the hands of a small elite'.

This means that the elite wields power and, human nature being as it is, those with economic power tend to make sure that they are financially well rewarded. An easy socialist response is to say that this proves the need for either public ownership or some form of workers' control, to make the elite accountable either to the voters or their employees. As Miller and Estrin say, 'market socialists want to have a free market in products, and either no market at all, or a well-regulated market, in labour and capital'.

This poses a number of problems — some obvious, some less so. The obvious ones: if there is *no* market in labour and capital, how can a market in goods and services conceivably exist? The very process of creating a varied market for competing products does not make sense unless there is some kind of market in which the capital and labour is sought to generate the supply of those goods and services. If capital(ist) companies are converted into publicly owned social(ist) enterprises, how can we avoid the problems of lethargic public sector monopolies — those creatures of what is now universally condemned as 'Morrisonian nationalisation'? If there is to be no market in labour, by what criteria are workers to be paid, and how are their skills to be allocated? Who is to make what investment decisions and how?

In principle real-world socialists have to concede that a market in goods and services requires a market of some sort in capital and labour. This means that inequalities of wealth and power will persist. But once this point is conceded, does the term 'democratic socialism' possess any distinctive meaning, or are we forced to choose between trying to make capitalism work better and trying to make state capitalism work at all? Stay tuned. □

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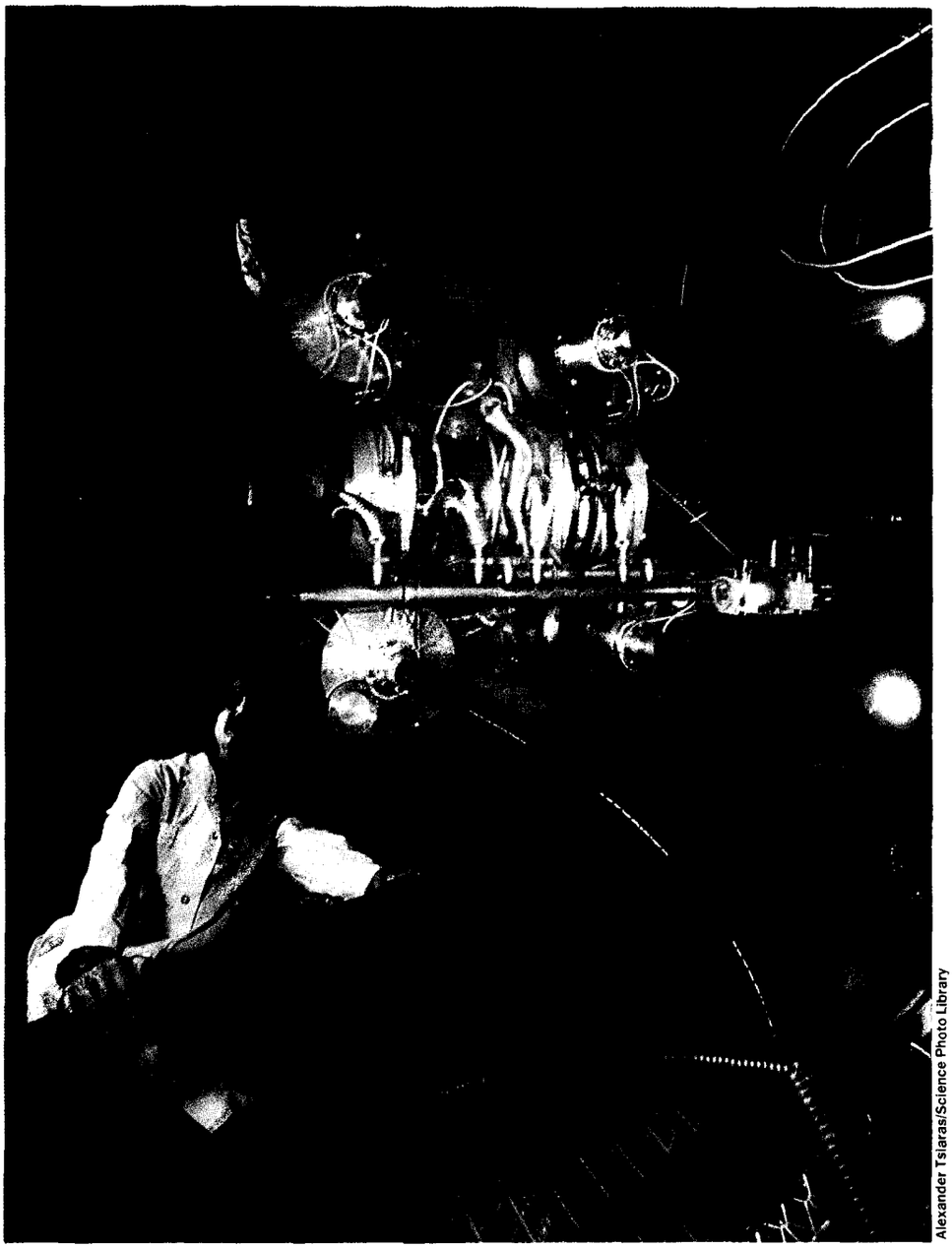
'Conspiracy to commit murder is a crime'



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Mrs Thatcher gave her support to the Strategic Defence Initiative last weekend: in return, Reagan promised her Trident. Yet the first holds up an arms control agreement which would render the second unnecessary.
JEREMY LEGGETT *reports*

THE FAILURE of the Reykjavik summit nearly six weeks ago now appears cast in marble. Earlier this month (6 Nov.), US Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Secretary Edward Schevernadze parted, 'a bitter-taste in the mouth' at the end of the five hours of talks in Vienna.

At the root of the failure is a dream: a dream of President Reagan's that the Strategic Defence Initiative — Star Wars — can provide a complete shield against all nuclear attack, and that it might thus usher in an age of security never before experienced.

It would do this by placing in space laser stations able to destroy warheads with intense beams of light. To be a complete shield it would have to work perfectly as soon as an attack were launched. Yet it is estimated to need some *50 million lines* of *computer software: the space shuttle, with one* per cent of that total, has had frequent computer faults.

It is this dream which prevented a nuclear arms central package of unprecedented size and scope being adopted at Reykjavik, and which prevents one still.

Now, as never before, the SDI issues need explicit, and widespread, articulation: in Britain, our very futures will be shaped by their resolution — or lack of it.

Can SDI *ever* work as the leak-proof umbrella President Reagan wishes to bequeath his people? If it cannot, how would a *partially-effective* SDI affect the strategic balance? Why do the Soviets fear SDI so much? How is the President able to sell something which is not even a proven concept to the American people — in the face of an enormous budget ($3.5 billion in 1987) and the huge apparent cost to disarmament opportunities? What will happen to arms-control if SDI goes ahead as President Reagan plans? Will the risk of nuclear war be increased, or decreased?

In the interviews which follow, three top-level protagonists directly engaged in the SDI debate offer views covering the complete spectrum. General Malcolm O'Neill, from the SDI Office (SDIO), spells out the latest administration position. Dr Alexei Vasiliev, a senior arms control expert at the USA-Canada Institute, Mr Gorbachev's premier foreign-policy think tank, counters. Dr Richard Garwin, a long-time nuclear weapons consultant to the US Department of Defense, and an adviser to past presidents on the military uses of space, offers views representative of many of the large, patriotic but disaffected American technical community.

Brig.-Gen. Malcolm O'Neill

BRIGADIER-GEN. MALCOLM O'NEILL is assistant to the Director of the SDI programme, General Abrahamson.

Leggett: How significant a strategic defence can SDI aspire to? To what extent can that defence be extended to the European allies?

O'Neill: We aspire to a complete defence against strategic forces for the US and all our Allies. As we transition to total defence, we will strive to provide options for ballistic missile defence (BMD) which will be significant enough to force the superpowers to redefine the basis of strategic nuclear strategy. Together with arms control and arms reduction initiatives, we hope to catalyse an evolution toward a more secure world. Of course, the

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technical challenge is significant, and our job is further complicated by the requirement to conduct a diverse research programme which exploits the various strengths of our technology and is carefully balanced to avoid shortcomings in the overall system. But just as ballistic missiles stimulated a reduction of bomber forces in the '60s, so we hope that BMD will stimulate a reduction of missile forces in the '80s and '90s. The first BMD system will not be perfect; however, it will be capable enough to complicate the planning necessary for a ballistic missile attack. The security of Western Europe would be guaranteed to the same extent as that of the US.

Leggett: The Soviet negotiators in Reykjavik expressed concern that SDI could contribute to a first-strike capability. Is that a valid fear?

O'Neill: This is not a valid fear since the US has proposed to the Soviets a fully co-ordinated and balanced reduction of arms during the SDI research which they fully understand will not end overnight. The SDI effort can be closely monitored. Neither the USSR nor the US can put itself in a position which would allow the other party a first strike capability. At present the Soviets have deployed defences around Moscow. Does this Soviet deployment contribute to a first strike capability? We certainly have accepted some level of Soviet defence at or below which we see no infringement of our Allied retaliatory capability. The president has made no secret of the fact that he wants to reduce offensive arms and that a successful SDI would allow reductions to levels well below those which would be considered prudent for retaliation. Whether or not SDI is successful, the President is willing to undertake bold arms reductions.

Leggett: President Reagan maintains that SDI is a non-nuclear programme, yet the X-ray laser is but one of several nuclear-pumped directed energy weapons under investigation. How *can* SDI be non-nuclear?

O'Neill: The President was speaking about the US SDI system when he said that it will be non-nuclear. As you know, the Soviets have a nuclear SDI system deployed around Moscow and they have never stated that they will preclude nuclear options from their future deployments. Although it's a very small portion of the SDI effort, the US is examining nuclear techniques so that we will understand first what our retaliatory forces would be subjected to by a Soviet nuclear defence and next, what options the US would have to utilise these techniques in its own defence.As a cursory review of the US programme will clearly indicate, we have placed the overwhelming preponderance of our resources into more sophisticated, higher risk, non-nuclear research initiatives. Our hope is to provide the President with an SDI development option that is non-nuclear, but which can be robust enough to exist in an environment which an enemy may choose to make nuclear.

Leggett: How successful has the SDIO been in attracting interest and participation in industry, and among academic physicists?

O'Neill: The SDI has been successful in attracting participation of both industry and academia. The amount of participation is limited by dollars not by a lack of interest in either community. Of course, as you've doubtless heard, a small percentage of those asked to contribute to the programme have declined to do so. Their reasons for so declining are varied and include first a conviction that they were not strongly competitive in relation to other organisations; next, a reluctance to accept the high risk associated with advanced research; and finally, a belief that a political statement opposing a strategic defence was required. Additionally, let me comment about your concentration upon 'physicists' as opposed to other academic disciplines. The most important discipline in the SDI is engineering since in most cases the solution to the research question is within the ken of physics but engineering feasibility, especially with regard to value for investment made, is the unknown.

Leggett: How independent is SDI of Congress? Do you think SDI can live on beyond the Reagan Administration?

O'Neill: The SDI, like any US Government programme receives its resources from Congress. The $3.2bn funding received in '87 represents a major commitment of Congress to the programme.

Leggett: How important to SDI is the participation of scientists and industrialists from the European allies?

O'Neill: The participation of scientists and engineers from Allied nations is badly needed in the SDI, especially since we hope to generate technical solutions to the problem of defending Western Europe against ballistic missiles. I don't think we can expect to accomplish that without Allied insights and European technologies. Since an Allied approach to ballistic missile defence of Western Europe will involve multinational decisions, there must be a full Allied understanding of the technical as well as the political tradeoffs associated with various options. How better to obtain these necessary technical insights than to participate in the research? My experience with Allied scientists and engineers has been excellent, and typically the number of new ideas and innovative approaches which I am exposed to on my trips to Europe fully justify my efforts to co-ordinate within the broader group. ●

Dr Alexey Vasiliev

DR ALEXEY VASILIEV, a senior arms control expert, was among the group who wrote the first Soviet technical report on the feasibility of SDI and has been much interviewed on the subject by the Soviet media.

Leggett: What is the current balance of opinion among Soviet scientists on the workability of SDI?

Vasiliev: The first concept to be advanced in the US was an SDI which would provide an *absolute* defence of American territory by making all missiles 'impotent and obsolete', The more recent idea is to produce some sort of intermediate system which can 'strengthen deterrence'. In my opinion the *absolute* system is an impossibility. Absolutely. As far as I know, all Soviet experts share that view. And even the President, I think, now realises it.

But nearly all Soviet experts believe that some *limited* form of SDI is possible. The question, then, is to what extent the intermediate system is feasible, and what its maximum effectiveness — in terms of destroying missiles — could be. I do think that something less than 50% might be achievable.

The question the Americans must ask themselves is this: what would be the price of building this partial strategic defence capability? From the Soviet viewpoint the conclusion must be that in all cases — in peacetime, during a crisis, over the risk of initiating war — it would be too high. Let us take peacetime. How can we speak about *drastic* arms reductions (and we must speak about drastic reductions, not cosmetic ones) when such new technology is being developed? While SDI remains capable of destroying a small number of missiles, how could we negotiate down to that small number? The strategic balance would be destroyed.

Another factor is the balance between offensive and defensive weaponry. Gerald Yonas, the deputy chief of the SDI programme, has said that SDI will influence not only defensive doctrines but offensive doctrines. Lowell Wood, a famous American expert, has said the same. An American Air Force Manual — Military Space Defense Doctrine number 1.6, issued in 1982 before the Star Wars speech— has a preface to one chapter recalling a quote by General White. He says that nations who dominate in the air would dominate on land and sea, and sees no reason why a nation dominant in space cannot be dominant on earth. An official Air Force document! If you consider all this, I think you will be able to understand our caution.

Leggett: If President Reagan cannot be persuaded to abandon SDI, or confine research to the laboratory, what will be the likely effects on arms control in the years to come?

Vasiliev: President Reagan is not the last American President, and there is also the opinion of the American public to consider. I believe that the public is beginning to understand the balance between the costs and the risks where SDI is concerned. They may question the impact of SDI on arms control: they will have seen what happened in Reykjavik.

Leggett: General-Secretary Gorbachev recently said that if the worst came to the worst, and the West pressed on with SDI research and development, they would be surprised at the ease with which the Soviet Union could join the competition. There was much speculation at the time about what exactly he meant.

Vasiliev: I see no basis for any speculation. I think Mr Gorbachev was completely clear. He said that the Soviet response would be asymmetric. The X-ray laser is not the best way to combat SDI. In the first Report of the Committee of Soviet Scientists on SDI we tried to arrive at our own assessment of countermeasures, and came to the conclusion that spending on these would come to only a few per cent of the total sum spent on SDI itself. Even now, after the shift of emphasis of the SDI programme, our response has not changed. I would say we could do it with off-the-shelf technology. Take the sophisticated technologies: X-ray lasers, chemical lasers, free-electron lasers, and so on. None of these has a shield against a heap of nails sharing the same orbit in space and travelling in the opposite direction.

Leggett: Do you see any significance in the development of the SDI concept at the same time as the American military are developing a number of potential pre-emptive first-strike (counterforce) technologies and also expanding their anti-submarine warfare programme?

Vasiliev: This is one of the main reasons why we cannot consider SDI as a purely defensive system. Because it is part of a package of extremely dangerous, extremely destabilising, systems. If the American government would like to convince us,

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and the rest of the world, that SDI is purely defensive why not agree to stop the development of future generations of strategic weapons? When we are talking about the Stealth bomber, and the Trident D-5 missile, and so on, we are talking about weapons systems which will be active as the turn of the century approaches — just the time when SDI would be becoming active. Consequently, we have to consider the sum effect.

Leggett: Mr Gorbachev has placed much store on the Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB) in his foreign policy aspirations. This has come at a time when the United States government seems more set than ever before on maintaining a capability for nuclear testing. Given the resistance of the Reagan Administration to a complete ban, to what extent do you think a lower-threshold quota test-ban treaty might be acceptable to the Soviet Government? And do you think such a treaty could stop SDI?

Vasiliev: The main influence of a Comprehensive Test Ban would be not on the technological scene but on the political atmosphere. A CTB would help us improve our national security connections. We are *bound* to invent some way of stopping the nuclear arms race. That *must* come.

Lowering the level of testing would have to be pre-conditioned by a mutual understanding of where we are moving to — what is the final purpose. And if we are able to agree that our intention is to arrive at a CTB as soon as possible, then I think that any discussion in the area of quotas, or of additional verification, is really possible. This is only my personal view, but I think we are ready to discuss such matters. ●

Dr Richard Garwin

DR RICHARD GARWIN played a major role in building the first hydrogen bomb and is an expert in the testing of nuclear weapons. He served on the Pentagon's Defense Science Board and for eight years on the President's Science Advisory Committee, where he chaired or served on panels dealing with military aircraft, strategic weapons, naval warfare, and military uses of space.

Leggett: George Shultz said on 20 October that the purpose of the SDI programme was 'to learn whether and how we can defend ourselves in whole, or in significant part, against the principal means of destruction — the ballistic missile'. In your opinion, can SDI ever provide such a defence either 'in whole' or 'in significant part'?

Garwin: George Shultz, a good soldier, has found an excuse for supporting his President's SDI programme. But the President in his recent speeches, and the Secretary of Defense, assured the American people that 'we will deploy' strategic defences at the end of the research programme — leaving no possibility for a discovery that we cannot defend ourselves 'in significant part'.

President Reagan's goal in launching the SDI in March 1983 was a defense so good that the US and its allies could ignore Soviet nuclear weapons and abandon our own. Reagan had not consulted his experts in the Pentagon, and, in truth, the SDI has become the emperor's new clothes. The SDI leadership under General Abrahamson has emphasised the essentiality of destroying most of the Soviet missiles in boost launch phase, but that can only be done (in case of a *Soviet* strike) by having US defences in space — where they are terribly vulnerable to destruction by Soviet anti-satellite weapons. The attacker need punch only a modest hole in the system to be able to launch his thousands of missiles with little loss. Shultz's programme is doomed to failure.

Leggett: Could SDI contribute to a first-strike capability?

Garwin: The Soviets can hardly believe that the emperor has no clothes. Their conservative military planners see instead a demonic logic in a US system which would not defend against attack, but which would be a more effective defence against retaliation by the Soviet Union after a *US* first strike.

In logic, but not in reality, SDI promises to deny the Soviets the prospect of retaliation against the US first strike.

Reagan officials give tortured justifications for the $600m sought by the Administration for nuclear-weapon-pumped X-ray lasers in what Reagan repeatedly reminds us is a 'non-nuclear SDI program'. The Soviets see the SDI technology of pop-up X-ray lasers as well suited to supporting a US first-strike capability against Soviet weapons. It is that which requires a counter from the Soviets, and the Soviets would rather not be forced to the choice of building more or different weapons, or accepting effective US superiority in offensive weapons (because we will have an offence plus a not very good defence).

In US law, murder is, of course, a crime; but so is conspiracy to commit murder. This is so even if the murder never takes place or if the intended weapon is defective. Should the state or the intended victim be upset to learn that others are actively conspiring to commit murder, albeit with a not very credible weapon?

Leggett: Some testing of prospective SDI components has already been carried out. What is your assessment of the tests to date?

Garwin: SDI testing has had the purpose of fostering publicity and funding, not technical progress. An SDI scientist warns against the 'strapped-down chicken test', in which such a hapless bird is destroyed by a rail gun or other novel weapon, and the result is paraded as proof that we are now able to destroy chickens with rail guns (read: 'destroy warheads in space with non-nuclear hit-to-kill projectiles'). But since the key problem of an effective defence is to survive against the weapons of the other side, and to *find* the targets and to discriminate them from millions of decoys, the strapped-down chicken test gives little comfort. Testing of SDI-related technology, system components, or subcomponents is controversial because the US-Soviet ABM (anti-ballistic missile) Treaty of 1972 (of perpetual duration) bans the development of ABM systems which are spaced-based, mobile, or air-based, and this ban has traditionally been considered by the US and Soviets to begin in the potentially visible testing stage outside the laboratory.

Testing outside the laboratory is costly and unnecessary to technical progress. It would be necessary before a system could be fully defined and deployed, but adequate testing would not be possible without running World War III, complete with nuclear explosions in space and in the atmosphere.

Leggett: How do you assess the likely impact on arms control if the SDI programme goes ahead?

Garwin: Although there is no prospect for a defence so good that it would *replace* deterrence by the promise of nuclear retaliation, the SDI programme is already an effective weapon directed at the heart of the 1972 ABM Treaty. The elimination of the ABM Treaty is a long-standing and high-priority goal of Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and his Assistant Secretary Richard N. Perle.

More general, though, is the likely impact of defences on the reductions in ballistic missiles which both the US and Soviets have stated is their goal. Both sides agree (which does not make it true) that an agreement to eliminate strategic ballistic missiles by 1996 foundered on disagreement over the SDI. Further, it is clear that neither the Soviets nor the US would happily grant the other side an effective defence if it could counter it; else why not pre-emptively abandon our own nuclear weapons? That the Soviets are *strongly* motivated to counter the threat to their nuclear weapons is amply demonstrated by the many billions of roubles they have invested in hardening their ICBM silos to make them considerably stronger than US silos.

Because it might prevent the unconstrained pursuit of the SDI programme, the Reagan Administration rejects a Soviet-proposed ban on testing space weapons; certainly the Soviets will not keep their weapons out of space while the US tests and deploys weapons there with the function of disarming Soviet nuclear weapons.

Is it really in the NATO security interest to allow every nation to deploy weapons in space?

Leggett: To what extent has SDI's future become independent of a change of administration in 1988?

Garwin: The SDI technology and dreams go back to the 1950s. The SDI programme has emerged now not because of the evolution of computer technology and sensors, but because the technical competence and strategic judgment at the top levels of the US government has fallen to unprecedentedly low levels. Embarrassing as it is to recognise this decline for an American long involved in technical and strategic aspects of national security, the strength of the United States ultimately depends on its understanding of reality.

As for the durability of the SDIO and its budget, it is neither popular with the US military nor highly regarded by them. Uniformed criticism of the SDI is scarce, in part because of a 4 September 1985 directive from Secretary of Defense Weinberger requesting of the Department of Defense, 'all personnel, military and civilian', to provide 'active and timely support' to the SDI as the 'highest priority' programme in the Department of Defense.

Since the bureaucratic survival of the SDI programme depends on a favourable view by the public, it is natural that SDIO has incorporated some research of good quality, although of questionable relevance to the SDI. These programmes would not be lost if the SDIO were abolished. It would be like declaring the SDI programme bankrupt and putting it into 'receivership', so that those elements which have value on their own merits could be transferred to other agencies of the US government. ●

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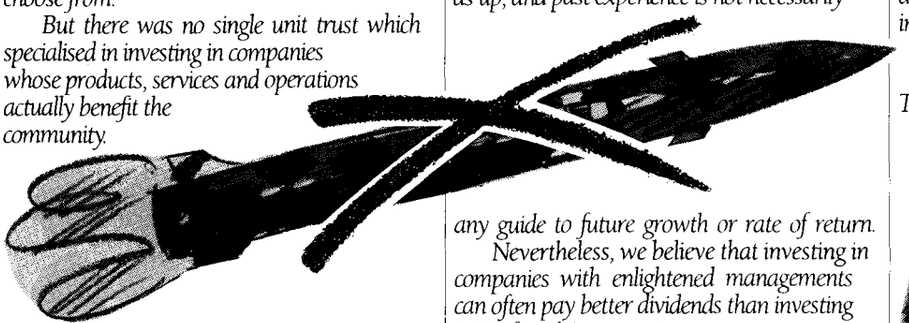

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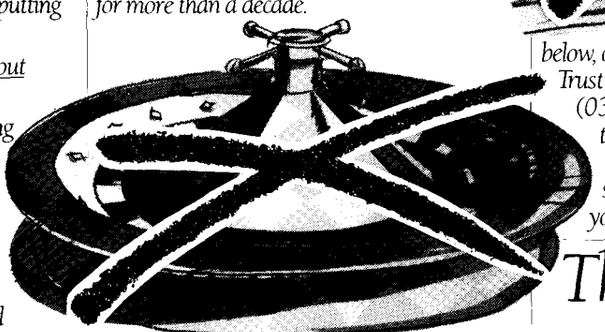

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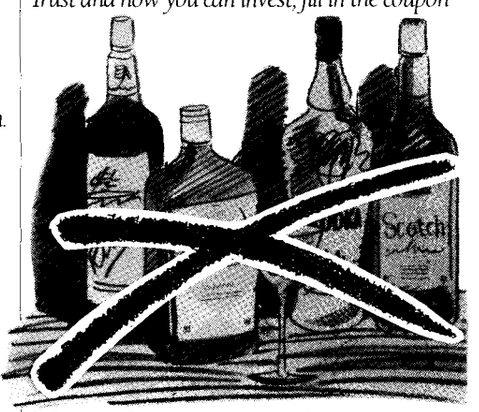

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BELFAST DIARY

We've had a rocky year of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Amid rekindled Loyalist fury and with little to show for it, the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) leader John Hume still holds to the Agreement as an article of faith. Loyally echoed by his party, he made his first substantial defence of progress last week, pleading, with justice, that it is too soon to pass harsh judgment on a process meant to redress a half century's pattern of grievance. 'This is a framework for dealing with the disease of division, and it promised to address certain questions — but if those were dealt with tomorrow the divisions would remain,' he said, perhaps less reassuringly than he had intended. Mr Hume was also tempted into listing reforms achieved and subjects currently on the agenda: of the issues dealt with, four had already been in the pipeline prior to the Agreement. He began by claiming the Agreement had averted a serious hunger-strike — he didn't add that the Irish National Liberation Army prisoners convicted on supergrass evidence ended their fast when promised news in the summer of an appeal date. They're still waiting.

○

As I listened to this somewhat painful rationalisation, I had the impression of readjustment to realities, of expectations being downgraded. In the same interview, Hume defined the present state of government in Northern Ireland in a telling phrase: 'We (the nationalist minority) had Stormont, we didn't like that: it was replaced by Direct Rule and that was better: now it's Direct Rule with Irish government *input, better still.*'

○

Asked what 12 months of the new deal has achieved, an SDLP representative in an area where Catholic homes have been petrol-bombed by Loyalists told me resolutely: 'We've broken the mould — the Irish dimension's in place — it's given people a spring in their step.'

There is an equally resolute refusal to dwell on the major issues — partly sheer defensiveness, partly in the knowledge that the present Dublin government is living on borrowed time and that their vigour, or lack of it, in pushing for a more positive British approach, will soon be history. In the meantime conviction is shored up, at least in public, by the ceaseless complaint of Unionists that they are now the oppressed.

Protestant politicians are even more emotive in private: 'Surely all the Civil Righters didn't want the wheel turned full circle and the boot on the Unionist neck — it's a bloody scandal.' If you are Unionist, an admission that Catholics were indeed on the receiving end for 50 years can never be explicit — talk of the wheel turning full circle is as close as it ever comes. Unionist outrage not only damps down moderate nationalist scepticism about the value of the minority's supposed victory — it even manages to confuse attitudes among the Provos, the supporters of Sinn Fein and the IRA.

In public Sinn Fein leaders veer between condemnation of the Agreement as legitimation of British occupation and claims that they deserve credit for any amelioration of Catholic conditions it produces. Yet at grassroots level, there is still an odd willingness to wait and see what the process can deliver. 'Is she (M. Thatcher) really going to stand by it?' a young IRA man asked an SDLP man recently as they stood together at a family funeral. The question wasn't the opening shot in a debate, more in the nature of thinking aloud. This has been a difficult issue for the Provos. They've found it hard to answer the gut question: 'If there's nothing in this Agreement, why are the Unionists going mad?'

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The Unionist campaign against the Agreement has been a shambles. But it was assisted by Mrs Thatcher's pre-occupation with her government's own future and the Dublin government's slide into impotence, and it has achieved a great deal. So much so that one Unionist observer, influential in the background, wondered aloud to me in private recently if Northern Ireland could be heading for what he termed the worst of all outcomes. 'If the British let this Agreement die with a whimper now the Protestants will say: hold firm boys, no need to concede anything now — everyone will be worse off.' Two months ago the same man estimated that an autumn 'package of reforms' — as originally touted by Nicholas Scott, the Northern Ireland minister most abominated by Unionists — would effectively stop any further discussion within the Unionist camp of concessions to the minority which might be offered as an alternative to the Agreement.

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The Northern Ireland Office civil servants who have maintained contact with senior Unionists throughout the past year — discreetly and at arm's-length in Northern Ireland, more openly at Westminster — have been given the same line. Their memos on what the majority can be expected to tolerate without further uproar have been exceedingly effective. An autumn package of reforms was never packaged: minor gestures replaced it, doled out piecemeal. The Agreement's architects, at least on the Irish side, in those heady days pre-15 November 1985, talked about an undramatic process, rarely to be marked by public pronouncements. But they foresaw, or said they did, continuous achievement, not occasional insignificant hand-outs interspersed with public disagreement — as on changing the courts.

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From early this year, while Catholics at the grassroots managed to keep themselves warm in Unionist hot air, some SDLP people have been assessing progress coolly. Rarely in public, however. For the party at large the maxim is 'keep your head down and wait it out'. Even the most loyal leadership spokesmen say they field widespread incredulity that the Unionists will in fact 'be faced down', the essential precondition for discussion on devolution. There is also considerable frustration at the prospect of party organisation — never strong — withering for lack of exercise. What little test there has been of electoral sympathies (in a couple of by-elections for rural local government places) merely supports the belief that Sinn Fein and the SDLP now have mutually exclusive blocks of hard-core support.

I hear increasing comment in the SDLP below leadership level that the party as an organisation has no more prospect now than last year of any direct role inside Northern Ireland: and that this time, after 16 years of survival by the skin of their teeth they are perhaps closer than ever to going under.

○

Unionist denunciation of John Hume for by-passing a possible settlement within Northern Ireland by moving the problem into the Irish-British sphere is hard for SDLP people to take seriously, given that they never saw the slightest sign of Unionist sincerity on the subject. The irony is, however, that some SDLP people are now increasingly uncomfortable with their own subordination to Dublin representation. Dublin deals directly with London, Peter Barry with Tom King, the Dublin Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) with the Northern Ireland Office. A very few SDLP people, no more than five, are regularly contacted by the DFA for information.

'Quite a lot of us have no role', is how one formerly prominent SDLP figure puts it. 'It is very frustrating, you feel in Limbo.' There is a very swift afterthought. 'But I personally would rather sweat it out than go back to where we were before.' The stoicism will probably last, unless Limbo for the SDLP gives way to the Purgatory of a betrayal parallel to that of the Unionists.

Fionnuala O Connor

ROGER WODDIS

Chopping down the cherry tree

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— President Reagan
'Father, I cannot tell a lie.' — George Washington

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Whom Emerson roundly lampoons:
'The louder he talked of his honour,
The faster we counted our spoons.'

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PERMANENT GOVERNMENT

Whitehall signals from the lecture hall

Peter Hennessy

WHAT DO THE 'permanent politicians' in Whitehall do if they want to communicate with Opposition leaders who in a year or so might become their political bosses in government? The 'Douglas-Home Rules', as they are known from the era in which they were drawn-up, forbid formal contacts between Leader of the Opposition and Head of the Civil Service, shadow ministers and permanent secretaries, until an election is imminent (Michael Foot did not even bother to activate the arrangement in 1983).

Informal contacts outside the 'Douglas-Home' period can be made at trade dinners and the like. But such is the rigid separation of the 'ins' and 'outs' in our adversarial system, that other means have to be found for conveying signals.

Last year, for example, Neil Kinnock took the opportunity in May of an interview on *A Week in Politics* to let Whitehall know he had no intention of replacing the career-lifers with political appointees. A month later, addressing an audience of accountants, Sir Robert Armstrong, Head of the Home Civil Service, welcomed his statement and assured Kinnock that 'the Civil Service would serve the Government of which he was the head with no less loyalty, energy and goodwill than they have served the present Government and its predecessors'.

The latest signal from the lecture hall came from Miss Anne Mueller, Armstrong's number two in his capacity as top Civil Service manager. At the Institute of Personnel Management Conference in Harrogate last month, she made a thinly coded plea to Labour and the Alliance to continue the managerial reforms associated with the name of Lord Rayner, chairman of Marks and Spencer and Mrs Thatcher's first Efficiency Adviser. 'The conclusion I must draw from continuing pressure on resources and rising expectations,' said Miss Mueller, 'is that it must be in the interests of all political parties to secure better value for money from the resources available.'

Lord Rayner is one of the few Thatcher advisers, perhaps the only one, whom it is possible to envisage serving a different type of administration. The logic behind his Whitehall thinking *is* politically neutral: whether central government activity is shrinking or growing, it is wasteful to deploy a pound or an official more than the task requires.

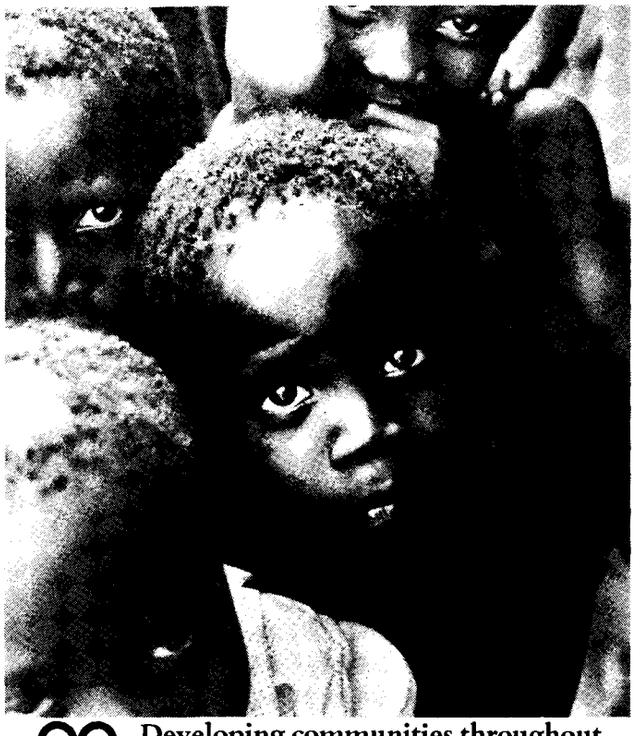
By coincidence, Miss Mueller's lecture was quickly followed by an exposition of the Rayner philosophy of the well-managed state by Clive Priestley, his former chief-of-staff in the Cabinet Office now with British Telecom*. In essence, the Priestley thesis is that wherever the boundary is drawn between the public and the private sectors, the core of state activity that remains will be substantial, highly important to its consumer (the citizenry) and must be regarded, therefore, as worthy of the best quality management available.

Anne Mueller, Derek Rayner and Clive Priestley could be on to something — the one Thatcher initiative, improved Whitehall management of people and money, which will endure from administration to administration, an instrument as useful to believers in the big state as it is to those who wish to reduce it once more to the Victorian role of nightwatchman.

Thanks to yet another coincidence, Labour and Alliance MPs on the Commons Public Accounts Committee will have a chance to explore these themes next month when the PAC takes evidence on the latest report from the National Audit Office dealing with Whitehall's financial management initiative, the centrepiece of Raynerism**. If the hearings attract publicity, it will be a window of opportunity for Labour to present itself as the party not only of production but of management as well. □

Peter Hennessy is a Visiting Fellow at the Policy Studies Institute.

*Clive Priestley 'Promoting the Efficiency of Government' in *Managing the Bureaucracy*, Adam Smith Institute, £8.
**National Audit Office, *The Financial Management Initiative*, HMSO, £6.



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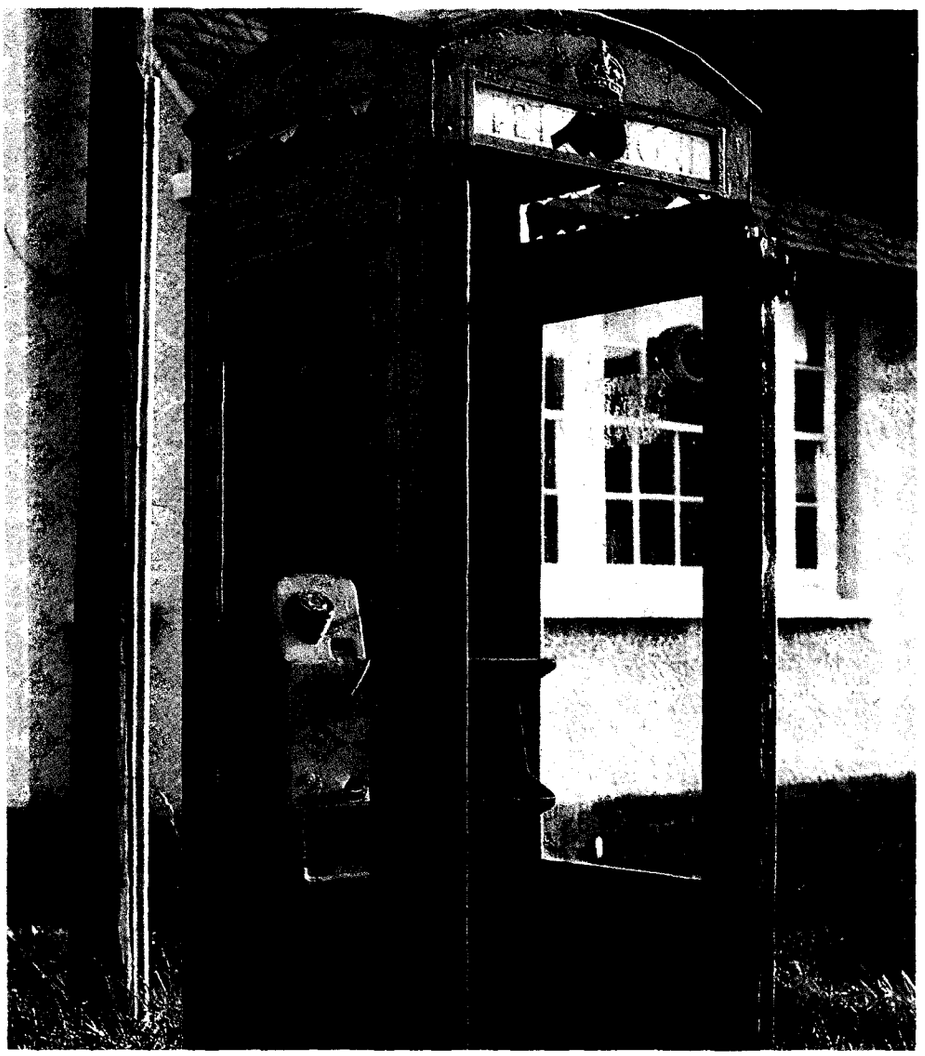

Rex Features

The left would once have seen the priority given to crime in the Queen's Speech as a Tory diversion. But in the last two years much of the left has done a* volte-face *and accepted that the fear and experience of crime really* is *a central political issue. In the second of two enquiries into the shifting 'politics of crime'* SARAH BENTON *explores where the left is moving on the issue — and where it may have to move next

RESOLUTE WORDS on law and order have been a feature of Tory election manifestos since 1966. But it was not until 1979 that they picked on rising crime as a party political issue. By then, Labour was already breaking with the bi-partisan approach to law and order. It began by linking effective policing to local democracy.

Judging by the speech of Shadow Home Secretary Gerald Kaufman to this year's Labour party conference, Labour too is going to make politics out of the crime rate and policing. 'Five years ago crime wasn't on the Labour Party's agenda,' he says, 'and now it is.' What's more 'it's the Labour Party now which is organising meetings on law and order, not the Tories.'

Crime has now been adopted by much of the left as a symptom of social distress. For the first time since sociology came to dominate our view of how society worked, it is sending off alarm signals. Or rather, its liberal wing which sought out the essential harmonising mechanisms in society can no longer find them. The most eminent of the liberal sociologists to have made an explicit link between crime and social breakdown is Ralf Dahrendorf, formerly director of the London School of Economics, now Professor of Sociology at Konstant in West Germany.

In an unpublished manuscript, 'Law and Order' based on a series of lectures he gave last year, Dahrendorf argues that crime is indeed rising rapidly in all Western countries (perhaps in the East too) but most sharply in the United States, Britain and West Germany. We can, he says, see in this process tendencies towards 'anomy', the term social scientists coined to describe a breakdown of order, a loss of hope or purpose. It is best defined, says Dahrendorf, as a state when 'a large and growing number of breaches of norms are known and reported but not sanctioned.' It is the absence of sanctions — effective checks or punishments — which is 'the true meaning of the erosion of law and order'. Law and order, he says, is 'the major subject of conflict in the developed societies of the free world.'

His argument thereafter draws on both theories of the welfare state and of the 'social contract', the guarantee of certain social and political rights in exchange for civil obedience which underlies the modern state. Mass unemployment and a retracting welfare state have 'marginalised' a large and permanent minority. They form a 'lumpenproletariat', a sub-class of a substantial number of people who are deprived of their rights. They, one-time full citizens, are less lawful, less ordered; neither state nor civil institutions have sanctions against their 'breaches'. The social contract breaks down. Anomy ensues. Civilisation as we know it has come to an end.

The sub-class

Who really disagrees with this view of crime? Not really the radical criminologists (see below) who speak of community breakdown; not even the Met's Commander Roach, in charge of Community Relations; (see interview in last week's *NS*) not fully Mary Tuck, Director of the Home Office's Research and Planning Unit, who gently guides her researchers through the social causes of crime. And not the right, who conjure up visions of hell people with punks, blacks and 'morons'.

Certainly not Leicester University sociologists Eric Dunning, Patrick Murphy and John Williams, who use a version of it to explain football violence. In an article in the British Journal of Sociology this June, they interpret research to show that most of those convicted of football violence were drawn from 'rough' council estates. They speculate that here, in a community

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of marked sexual segregation, macho aggression (towards women, children and each other) was habitual as the only means of asserting self-esteem. They too find the long term cause in the historical incorporation of most of the working class in 'respectable', relatively affluent life, leaving behind an increasingly impoverished sub-class.

DAHRENDORF may be the most eminent of the liberal sociologists to have made links between crime, class and state, the most eminent to have asked whether 1980s Western capitalism is, like 14th century feudalism, 'going through a similar phase of "apocalypse".' But he is only one of a burgeoning trend to see in the end of corporatism the end of a social and political order which has left socialists without any coherent view of progress.

André Gorz from France, Rudolf Bahro from East Germany, Claus Offe from West Germany, are among the influential post-Marxists who have argued that the politics of industrial class conflict is no longer the dominant politics of our age. None of them says, like Dahrendorf, that law and order is the dominant political conflict. But they agree that changes in the relationships between labour and capital, state as employer, state as welfare provider, state as the enforcer of order, and global state and business transactions inevitably change domestic law and order.

Some socialists do say that law and order is the dominant political conflict of our age, but that is because the right has made it so. Policing strategy, for instance, has made 'law and order' the dominant political question for black people. For both miners and print workers, the key political question of the last few years has not been capitalism, but the use of state powers against them.

But politics has dramatically shifted from being class against class within essentially one nation, to being about a series of competing or overlapping 'communities' within a disappearing nation-state. And socialists have enthusiastically taken up the new politics — of women, or blacks, or Scottish devolution, of miners *as community* rather than the vanguard of a class. As such socialists too have made the question of whose law and whose order the central political question of the age.

The radical criminologists

What's that got to do with ordinary crime? The bridge between the conventional socialist antipathy to 'law and order' and a new concern about crime is precisely the fragmentation of class into separate communities. The shift for the Left has been led by the radical criminologists: Professor Jock Young of Middlesex Polytechnic is one of their leading voices. He says that feminism, with its stress on women as victims of crime, did much to change their priorities. From women as victims it was a short step to the idea that crime and fear of crime play havoc with the lives of the poor and vulnerable. Not all the working class is poor and vulnerable; the black, female, elderly, very low income members of it are.

Stuart Hall, Open University professor and perhaps the most influential socialist thinker on crime, police and society, agrees there has been a significant shift. He points to changes in political theory in the 1970s. Those little groups of the early 1970s which beavered away at unravelling the dense thoughts of French Marxist Louis Althusser were actually the fore-runners of a sea-change in political thinking. It was through Althusser's work on ideology that the easy socialist notion of 'false consciousness', which allowed non-socialist popular beliefs to be dismissed, went into the dustbin of unhelpful ideas.

If instead one accepted that ideology, including beliefs about law and order and race, has some roots in lived experience then widespread anxiety about crime can no longer be ignored.

Public disquiet about rising crime and disorder was initially met by the left with the answer that we have always lived with disorder; if there is public alarm it was said, that reveals more about authoritarian tendencies in the Establishment than the actual incidence of lawlessness. Stanley Cohen's *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* 1971, *Policing the Crisis* by Stuart Hall and others, 1978, and *Hooligan: a history of respectable fears* by Geoffrey Pearson, 1983, were all read as accounts of Establishment values and tactics of class control. The problem was not crime, the left concluded, but the authoritarian state and the racist, sexist media.

Nothing has happened in the last few years to change the left's view that the state is more authoritarian. Indeed the policing of the miners' strike, and in particular the use of 'drug raids' by the police to assert their authority when black communities begin to organise, have confirmed that view. But beside it has grown the recognition that the relationship of the state to various communities is dynamic; you don't get change in one without change in the other.

And as socialist writers of various complexions have been hot in attacking the effects of mass unemployment or inner city deprivation they have had to take the next step and accept that crime may be one consequence of these deprivations. When that is linked with an angry feminist focus on the violent man it is a short step to seeing crime as an acceptable concern for socialists.

No more right and wrong

Until the 1960s, criminologists, says Rod Morgan, senior lecturer at Bath University, serviced the criminal justice establishment. They drew on medicine and psychiatry to produce the 'medical model' of the offender — a malfunctioning person who could be controlled or put right through custody or probation. The probation service, says one probation officer, was largely drawn from men who ran the colonial and armed services with a strong intake of evangelical Christians. They demanded discipline and manners in the best Boy Scout tradition or conversion in the missionary mode.

Radical sociologists from the 1960s upset this model of crime and its treatment. In what became known as the 'new criminology' they turned away from studies of the offender and looked at how state officials defined deviance and tried to control it. They set the pace for criminology in general and changed the probation service (but had less effect on prisons with their more obviously punitive role). Thus Norman Tebbit is right to identify 1960s sociology as the insidious thin edge of a liberalism that abandoned categories of right and wrong, and crime and punishment.

They did not believe in 'reforming' criminals either. Vivien Stern, Director of the National Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders, says many came to question whether or not state officials had the right to 'reform' the offender. Let alone the power. In an influential book of the early 1970s, *Punishment, prison and the public*, Rupert Cross wrote of the 'age of penal pessimism' we had entered.

Prison, the statistics showed, neither reformed nor deterred the criminal. Apart from pointing out that prison can harden the amateur criminal, and is still a shattering sentence for middle class persons with a reputation Vivien Stern agrees with this view. The belief that 'nothing worked' says Mary Tuck of the Home Office Research and Planning Unit, succeeded the old medical model and prevails in parts of the criminal justice system today.

Harry Fletcher, Assistant General Secretary of the probation officers' union, believes his members *can* have an effect. But that is largely through providing essential welfare help, housing, jobs, social security benefits. He is sceptical about 'reforming' criminals, not least because he, like almost everyone involved in the system, points to the sheer 'wretchedness' of most offenders. They end up on the wrong side of the law not because they are more wicked than other people, but because they are more incompetent. Most petty offenders (and most criminals *are* petty offenders) simply can't cope. A lot of prison officers agree. Prisons are stuffed with people who shouldn't be there, they say, not least the mentally ill.

Harry Fletcher also has another story. That is of the three young men who explained to him why so many of their unemployed friends did not claim the dole. It was, they said, less hassle to spend a few hours 'living off the street' than queuing up to claim social security benefit. This is the point that Home Office ministers simply refuse to recognise, he says. That is because the Home Office, charged with the resposibility of managing law and order, cannot say it is unmanageable. But if the malaise goes deeper, beyond improved welfare payments, or better housing management, or more jobs or even tighter police accountability, then even the most liberal Home Secretary could not break the dynamic of more social disrepair and heavier state management.

The contract broken

Nobody except the libertarian right, who propose private policing agencies, is arguing for the state to withdraw further from managing social relations. And here again Dahrendorf argues against former liberal views on the relation between citizens and the state. In the section of his 'Law and Order' which he acknowledges will be seen as an 'attack on my friends' he argues that the extension of freedom leads to anarchy and thence to anomy. The belief of the 18th century Swiss Rousseau that the maximum freedom for the citizen would lead to the most civilised society was all right for fighting the ancien regime of Europe, says Dahrendorf.

Push it further, and you revert to the view of the 17th century English philosopher Hobbes that society is a jungle of aggressive individuals on whom order must be imposed by a strong state. The essence of modernity, Dahrendorf contentiously argues, is the 'extension of options.' It has gone through a 'tidal turn' from being 'a force for freedom to a force for uncertainty.' The 'social contract' has broken down.

Leave aside that common refusal in liberal sociology to acknowledge that the state itself might, through its abuse of power, be a force for disorder. Leave aside the equally common assumption that different groups, classes, individuals somehow posses equal powers which balance each other out so politics plays no role. Look instead at the groups which anger and alarm the right: liberated women, blacks, punks. The right's alarm is well-founded: they *have* all contributed to the breaking down of one law and

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order in their pressure for another.

Women, gays, blacks, 'punks', have all pushed to come out from under the old order. It was an order in which the male head of household was dominant and in which rights were either individual or class rights, not those based on age, or sex or racial or ethnic origin or sexual orientation. The modern political age has seen women press their rights in relation to men, the young and the aged to the middle-aged, black in relation to white, homosexual in relation to heterosexual, the disabled to the able-bodied. Pressure groups have taken up children's rights in relation to parents, and even 'animal rights' in relation to humans.

But who will implement these 'rights' if those deemed to hold power don't just climb down? The state in one way or another. Thus women have pressed for new laws to restrict men (pornography, marital rape, kerb crawling), greater police intervention (domestic violence, sex shop displays, sexual assault), harsher sentencing (violent husbands, rapists) and more state protective provision (refuges for battered women, funds for the victims of rape or incest).

Gays have pressed for less police action against them but more state intervention to extend their rights as gay citizens. Black people have pressed for less police intervention in their communities but also more police action against crime and racial assault, and more state intervention against all forms of racism. The disabled pressure groups recently tried, and failed, to get a bill through parliament outlawing discrimination against them, police and social workers have had to review their procedures for protecting children's rights.

The 'new politics' of movements for peace, the third world, ecology and for citizens of Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland all also, though in a different way, challenge the territorial boundaries and dealings of the British nation state. In this sense, the demand for new freedoms does also make law and order the central political issue of the day.

The new crimes

The problem for a left trying to reach a coherent view on law and order is that the new politics of communities and single issues do not share the 1960s view that law must progressively retreat from personal life. It is radical groups which are saying that persuasion and tolerance do not work; that the state and, if necessary, the criminal law must be used *more* extensively against racists and sexists. 'I don't want racists to be nice to me', said Sivanandan, Director of the Institute of Race Relations, at the recent Left Unlimited; 'I want them to be punished.'

As women in particular have demanded their freedom from — or had it dumped on them by — husbands and fathers, so their demand for protection by the police has increased. Equally as women (and gays and blacks and children) have insisted that they have the right to pursue life, liberty and happiness on their own terms, so they insist that those who molest them are guilty of *criminal* assault.

Dahrendorf may thus be right that freedom increases crime. But this does not necessarily mean that freer people become more criminal. It equally means that freer people demand, paradoxically, more state action to guarantee that freedom. There are many who, like Dahrendorf, mourn the passing of the old order of class-based community; few who will face up to the lack of freedom which that old order imposed on the young, the women, the elderly, the Jews or Irish (before the war), the blacks and Asians afterwards.

It is in the *left*, now, that some of the strongest voices are to be heard, arguing that policing *can* make a difference — in sharp contrast to much official pessimism. The 'hard left', as represented by the old GLC police support group, have always argued the 'law and order' problem is a problem about the police and not about crime. The gulf between them and the 'soft left' is probably now unbridgeable. But the favoured solution put forward in both the Merseyside and Islington Crime Surveys, both carried out by the 'soft left' radical criminologists, focuses on the police solution. If the police responded to what people in the community wanted, then they would get the co-operation from the public on which all crime detection and public order maintenance depends.

There are few now who disagree that relationships between police and community have been peculiarly bad in the last decade. Both police and local authorities believe the answer lies in closer co-operation and more local autonomy for, in London, district police forces. But there is in London no structure acceptable to both sides, and even outside London where there are statutory police authorities, there is still conflict over the powers of the police committee and how its members should be elected.

The private ghettoes

A sensible government would remove a large source of the conflict by setting up an elected police authority for London, in line with the rest of the country. The boroughs that reject the consulative committees might be readier to accept them if there was some overall local accountability for their local police force.

But this raises the central flaw with the 'prevent crime through police accountability' answer. To begin with, as one Home Office official said, you could get the socialist republic of Islington and the fascist republic of Winchester, whose residents instructed the police to stop and search every black person who hoved into sight.

More immediately, as Tony Jefferson, one of the co-authors of *Policing the Crisis* says, this assumes the 'community' knows what it wants and is of one mind. It also assumes that people know who the criminals are so they could report them to a more sympathetic police, or that the only reason why women do not turn in their murderous lovers and husbands is because the police are unsympathetic. It assumes a lot which just is not true of fragmented inner city life. In particular, depending on how police accountability was determined, it could *increase* policing targetted on black communities — as white people are in the majority in all local authorities — not reduce it. In other words, an acceptable structure which would allow greater police and public co-operation would be a good idea. There are few who believe a new structure alone would make any difference to crime prevention.

This September the Labour Party published its first major policy on crime. Much influenced by radical criminology, it does claim that changes in policing can reduce crime. But it also proposes an expensive package of environmental changes.

There *is* evidence that where the community organises itself, crime levels fall. Tony Gifford's inquiry into Broadwater Farm suggests that this was happening *before* the increased policing which led, fateful step by fateful step, to the killing of PC Blakelock last year. Martha Osamor from the estate argues that the police move in *when* the community beings to organise; the highly publicised drug raids of Brixton or Bristol are a means of asserting police control over what threatens to be a no-go area, not a clamp down on crime as such. Experiments in the USA have found that when neighbourhood watch schemes are *combined with* community organisation and greater local police accountability both crime and the fear of crime fall. In Ireland they found that strong community organisation does more to drive out drug pushers than 'multi-agency' action on its own (though there has been little enough of that).

And there are arguments, though less evidence, that spending money on employing people in crime-prone areas is infinitely more effective than spending it on police or technology. The rail unions responded angrily to the Tory conference announcement that £15 million would be spent on panic buttons to make London's underground safer. The same money spent on more staff or trains and stations would be more reassuring and safer, they said. Similarly, more customs officers would be more effective against drug trafficking than more laws on drug profits.

THESE EXPERIENCES point to a solution that is simple in concept if not in execution. That is that crime prevention only works when 'the community' is well organised and when the various state agencies act in response to the needs which the community articulates for itself, not as a multi-agency crime prevention committee deems fit. And that the state's contribution cannot be provided on the cheap.

Community here means geographic community, largely because the delivery of state services is organised geographically, though also because people of shared class or race or political outlook tend to congregate in the same areas. The implication for political activists would be that collective organisation has to take place on territorial lines, not on the basis of sex or race or class as such or on any other of the old or new communities. It would mean that such communities would have to find their own way of disciplining actions that hurt one sex or race or age within that community if crime prevention is not simply to mean more state intervention.

But even if Britain were to be revived by a burgeoning of democratic communities, that would still leave untouched the national and international decisions that do so much to shape those 'options' for Dahrendorf's too-free citizens.

Can political parties still be the national organisation for those new political forces which have emerged from the breakdown of the simple antagonism of socialism versus capitalism? Or will the political parties continue to decline in membership and authority, leaving no national collective means of creating a new order out of the private ghettoes and public jungle which left and right, for different reasons, fear is encroaching? □

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All banged up and nowhere to go

Last week's prison hostage-taking was a symptom of a deep malaise in Britain's prison system.
PATRICK FORBES ***and*** **JOLYON JENKINS** ***find that solutions are to hand, but have foundered in the face of the failure of will by Tory ministers and senior civil servants***

IN THE WAKE of the Peterhead crisis, Tory ministers offered us two political chestnuts. On *Today*, Ian Lang, Scottish Office Minister, was asked what lay behind the riots. He had no hesitation in blaming dangerous, violent criminals — begging the question as to who he expected to find in prison. Later Lord Caithness chose not to discuss whether overcrowding might not lie at the root of the problems facing the prison system — the size of the criminal population was, 'up to the courts; we receive whoever they send us.'

This supine attitude is much to the liking of the group of senior civil servants that determine policy on prisons. Rather than discuss who should be in prison, and for how long, they have opted to build their way out of trouble — committing the Prison Department to an enormous programme of expansion over the next few years.

The 'builders' have been given a political lead by junior Home Office Minister David Mellor. An intensely ambitious man, Mellor is the Richard Perle, or Prince of Darkness, of the Home Office: put there by Thatcher to keep an eye on Douglas Hurd. Under Mellor's wing shelters Sir Brian Cubbon, Permanent Under Secretary to the Home Office, who played his evidence to the Public Accounts Committee this autumn with a notably square bat; and Christopher Train, Director General of the Prison Department, described by one pundit as 'a systems person obsessed with charts and maps, not somebody who goes in for any thinking — he'd do the same job working for Hyatt Regency.'

Over the last 20 years, both the Scottish Office and the Home Office have chopped and changed policies incoherently. The Scottish Office in the 60's and early 70's couldn't decide whether recalcitrant prisoners should be treated with the stick or the carrot — so they used both. The 'stick' was the bleak Inverness 'cages' — an extreme form of isolated confinement. These were introduced, suspended and reintroduced - and are now described by the Scottish Office as 'an option'. *At the same time*, the Scottish Office was experimenting with the Barlinnie Special Unit, whose liberal philosophy of therapy rather than punishment was diametrically opposed to the cages.

The Scottish Office has concentrated a high proportion of its long-term high security prisoners in Peterhead — a sort of Caledonian Alcatraz, with much the same conditions (see box). The Home Office went for the reverse strategy: moving the high-risk prisoners into eight high security 'dispersal' prisons around the country. Neither strategy has stopped riots. Almost every dispersal prison has had them regularly.

But the Home Office never even carried out the 'dispersal' strategy properly, with the high security prisoners in special wings: They've just

Peterhead — the powderkeg prison

GLEN HEWSON is 38, good-looking and poor. He rents a small, rather cold, single bedsit in Edinburgh for £50 a week. He fetches two cups of tea, lights the first of many thin roll-ups and begins to try and explain what it was like being a prisoner at Britain's most notorious jail.

'Once you go behind them walls in Peterhead, you're lost. You cease to exist anymore. You're just a number. Your name's forgotten. You're no longer part of anything at all. You're no longer part of society and you're no longer part of a family. You are completely and utterly isolated, shut off from every solitary thing.'

In January 1982, both his legs were broken after he fell off the prison's 22-feet high perimeter fence. The circumstances of the incident cannot be discussed as he is suing the Secretary of State for Scotland for £80,000 damages. He still cannot walk without a stick.

'One time when I got put down the cells, the screws took my sticks away from me. When they opened up the door 'cos I wanted to go to the toilet, they watched me crawl along the landing, literally dragging myself along like a snake. And when I got into the toilet, they didn't give me my sticks back. I had to lean over and just piss on the floor. And they watched me crawl back again.'

Glen Hewson comes from Kilburn in northwest London and speaks with a strong cockney accent. He moves his arms as he makes a point, searching for the words to convey the experience. He asks to be believed.

'I said to one screw that I wanted a piece of toilet paper. He just said nothing, put down the peephole and walked away. So I kept pressing the buzzer. I pressed that buzzer solidly for an hour. The next thing I know, the peephole has gone back and he says 'I fucking heard you to begin with. Here you are.' And he pushed it under the door — two sheets of toilet paper, just two bloody sheets. I just couldn't believe it.'

Glen Hewson's experience is not unusual. He does not allege widespread physical brutality, but a regime that over the years amounts to mental torture. Your cell is frequently 'turned over', your photographs constantly ripped off the walls, and long-awaited visits from your friends and relatives made to feel 'like shit'. You never talk to the screws and they never talk to you.

Of course there are a few cases where prisoners are alleged to have suffered undue physical violence. Thomas Campbell, convicted in 1984 of masterminding six murders during Glasgow's 'ice-cream wars', is planning to sue for damages arising from a perforated bowel which he claims was caused by kicks from Peterhead prison officers. He is also claiming compensation for a serious infestation of pigeon lice during a stay in the prison's hospital wing.

Over the last few years, hundreds of Peterhead inmates have written with complaints to the Scottish Council for Civil Liberties (SCCL). 'I feel like an animal in the zoo being provoked by some imbecile with a stick', wrote one in July 1984. According to another: 'This place is not so much a rehabilitation centre as a torture chamber. It wastes your mind. Turns you into a cabbage.'

Making complaints can be a fairly fruitless business. In recent days Scottish Office ministers have been continually stressing that complainants can go direct to Scotland's public prosecutor, the procurator fiscal, for a fair hearing. SCCL has one letter on file from Peterhead's fiscal roundly criticising one inmate for apparently believing such a notion.

This week, the Scottish prisons inspector, Tom Buyers, began his inquiry into prisoners' grievances and conditions at Peterhead, as instructed by the Scottish Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind MP. SCCL, along with a wide spectrum of MPs, has little faith in the process. It has seen it all before. A little flutter while the issue is in the public eye, then a decent burial. Meanwhile behind the scenes, the screw is turned.

'I can see what's going to happen now. They're going to try and make everybody forget about it', said Glen Hewson. 'They will try to hush it up to such an extent that eventually it will happen again. Have you noticed the trend of it? Each time it gets a little bit more violent. I honestly believe that if they don't do something about the conditions, someone eventually will get killed up there.'

Rob Edwards

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been thrown in with the rest, and extra security added *outside*. Result: extra internal trouble. 'When I was doing research in Albany,' says Rod Morgan of Bath University, 'the favourite game was burning your mate's budgerigar.'

UNLIKE MANY apparently intractable political problems — Northern Ireland, race relations — the solution to prison riots is quite straightforward, and there is a remarkable consensus both without and within sections of the establishment on what it is. Frances Crook of the Howard League for Penal Reform sums it up: 'There has to be a dual attack. The first thing is to get a large number of people who are in prison *out*. That leaves you with a core: you then have to create individual careers within the system in a more humane and caring way.' She said she had been at a conference the previous day with prison officers, probation officers, boards of visitors — 'all sorts of people; and everybody agreed that the most important thing is to treat long-term prisoners as individuals'.

That we imprison too many people seems unarguable. In 1984 Britain imprisoned 345 people per 100,000 of population. Germany locked up 175 per 100,000; France, 162; Turkey, whose prisons are notorious, also locks-up fewer — 313 per 100,000. A quarter of the British prison population are people who haven't paid their fines. Nearly 8,000 people (out of a total of 46,000) are held in prison on remand or awaiting sentencing — and transporting them back and forth to court is a drain on the prison service.

The most progressive thing that has happened to the prison system in recent years was the prison officers' strike of 1981, where the prison population fell by 8,500, simply because officers refused to accept more prisoners. Speaking later about the dispute, Home Secretary William Whitelaw accepted that the dispute had shown 'that it is possible for us to survive with a much lower custodial population . . . much lower numbers were seen to be consistent with supporting and enforcing the law.'

The problem of too many prisoners isn't the same thing as overcrowding. Overcrowding can in theory be dealt with, as the government is now trying to do, by building more prisoners. And generally speaking, the prisons that have riots — high security ones — are not overcrowded. The problem is that there are too many of the *wrong sort* of prisoners — the prison department is diverted, debilitated, and unable to pay serious attention to the question of what to do with that small minority of prisoners who have to be locked up because they are a danger to the public. For those people, there is also a consensus: Barlinnie Special Unit is the way forward.

The Prison Officers' Association, in the past supporters of the strictest discipline, has over the past four or five years tried to establish a more professional and progressive image, and has taken up radical positions on prison discipline, prisoners' rights, and grievance procedures. As the old soldiers have been replaced by ordinary would-be industrial workers, thuggish militancy has been replaced by union militancy. It's a remarkable change from the not-so-distant days when the POA's sole contribution to the Labour movement was its annual motion at the TUC in favour of capital punishment.

Not all sections of the Home Office are averse to liberal ideas. There are some discernible official moves in a more progressive direction — plans for a constellation of special units in the system, to which people regarded as too disruptive can be transferred. The first — primarily for prisoners with psychiatric problems — was opened in Parkhurst earlier this year. The second should be at Lincoln, next year.

And contrary to politicians' perception, the public is *not* united in wanting every criminal in the land behind bars for the rest of his or her life. As Paul Cavodino of NACRO points out 'The public is perceived as being punitive on the basis of terribly general questions: but rather more detailed surveys, for example the British Crime survey done by the Home Office, show opinion to be nothing like as hostile. For example, only a third wanted them put into custody, the other two thirds wanted them on community service or something like that . . .'

The real problem is selling reform to the Conservative Party, and those senior members of the civil service who have ultimate responsibility for the Prison Department. Conservative Home Secretaries, frightened by their own party, can be pushed into doing the most outrageous things. Leon Brittan at the 1983 Party Conference announced restrictions on parole eligibility for long-term prisoners, and restrictions on the release of life sentence prisoners - to appease those angry at his failure to secure the restoration of capital punishment. The result of his 'reforms' was a tangible increase in tension in the top security prisons, because the incentive which the parole system gives prisoners to behave was reduced.

IN A SENSE the story of prisons over the last 15 years is the story of the failure of all those prison reform groups — the Howard League for Prison Reform, the Prison Reform Trust, NACRO, to create a public lobby of sufficient power to outweigh the hangers and floggers. Why has this happened? Frances Crook of the Howard League gave the predictable response: 'Look at my budget, add it to the Prison Reform Trust's, and compare it with the big guns lined up against us — the judiciary, the magistrates, the Police Federation . . . I don't know, I don't want to think about your horrible question.' This is only half the answer — the remainder was provided by Alexander Rutherford, Chairman of the Howard League: 'It is a failure of political will on the part of those politicians clearsighted enough to see the chaos that lies ahead. They don't have enough courage.'

While there's nobody to give a lead to public opinion, the prison system will lurch from crisis to crisis. None of the experts is remotely optimistic. Professor Roy King, a lay member of the Home Office's review Committee on the new special units, 'It's appalling and perplexing. It does not matter which party gets in, or what predelictions a Home Secretary has: the situation just gets worse.'

Until the law and order lobby is defeated, our sad conclusion is that riots and hostage-taking can do nothing but good. As the Prison Reform Trust's Stephen Shaw pointed out: 'If Peterhead hadn't happened, you wouldn't be ringing me up now, would you?' □

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Keep the politics out of business

As new 'ethical' unit trusts take off, the campaign to clean up investments made on your behalf has taken one step back, one step forward, reports

JOHN RENTOUL

THE NEW LAW to force local councils to put services out to tender for contracts will also stop them imposing 'non-commercial' conditions on contractors and suppliers. This will block attempts by Labour councils to avoid ratepayers' money going to companies involved in South Africa, the Conservative Party or the weapons business.

But on another front, councils show signs of getting their act together at last over how their employees' pension funds should be invested. The new Pensions Information Resource Centre (PIRC) aims to co-ordinate efforts to use pension funds more positively. It has drawn up a Top Twenty hitlist of the most important British companies in South Africa that it is asking its members and sympathisers to avoid.*

Thirteen Labour councils have agreed to take action against any of the 20 they have shares in, in the form of shareholder resolutions, meetings with directors and ultimately disinvestment. Two others and one hung council (Warwickshire, Labour controlled with Liberal/SDP support) also agreed to support an international campaign against Shell (12th on the hit list). PIRC is next planning to single out ICI for the stocks.

Right-wing pressure groups have realised the import of the PIRC initiative. It was lobbying from Chambers of Commerce, the CBI and the Building Employers Confederation that persuaded Environment Secretary Nicholas Ridley to promise legislation against 'political' contract conditions. Now the Economic League, a reviving anti-Marxist business network under the new directorship of Michael Noar, has identified PIRC as a sinister threat to its members in its latest newsletter, urging companies not to co-operate with PIRC's inquiries.

MEANWHILE three explicitly ethical unit trusts are still demonstrating that There Is An Alternative to 'popular capitalism' for individual investors.

● The Stewardship Trust, run by Friends Provident, has just started to outperform the Stock Exchange as a whole. Since its launch in June 1984, its units have risen by 11.5 percentage points more than the FT Ordinary Index. It has always claimed to have outperformed the market, but this was based on the 'offer' price (like all unit trusts, you have to be prepared to invest for at least a year to cover the difference between the offer price at which you buy units and the lower bid price you sell them for, and performance claims should be on an 'offer to bid' basis). The trust invests in UK companies, trying to avoid those connected with weapons, South Africa, gambling, alcohol and tobacco, but invests in several companies that give money to the Conservative Party (such as United Biscuits, European Ferries and Rank Hovis McDougall).

● The Fellowship Trust, run by Buckmaster and Moore, was launched in July this year and units have gone up by only 1.8 per cent (offer to bid), which is reasonable for just four months. It has similar ethical criteria to the Stewardship Trust, although it has so far avoided investing in any Tory donors and 30 per cent of the fund is invested overseas (France, US, Japan, West Germany). But examining any portfolio can be disillusioning. How ethical is it to invest £24,000 in Sources Perrier, succour for yuppies?

● The Ethical Investment Fund, run by Bromige and Partners, also launched in July, is perhaps the purest of the three. (It is actually an insurance bond, which is similar to a unit trust.) It avoids, in addition to the other two, the nuclear industry, animal testing and political donations of over £10,000, banks and breaches of advertising standards. It's done better than the Fellowship Trust, rising 3.6 per cent already (offer to bid). Both have attracted over £800,000 of investment.

A fourth single-issue ethical unit trust is the Professional Growth Trust run by Fidelity in association with the British Medical Association (after a decision at its 1985 annual conference), which avoids tobacco companies. It has performed well since its launch in June 1985, rising by 30 per cent and attracting £5.8 million.

The ethical sector is spreading to all the parts that popular capitalism can reach, according to a new book called *Socially Responsible Investment* by Sue Ward (Directory of Social Change, £5.95). It reveals that you can even get an ethical personal pension, invested in the Stewardship Trust. □

*The list PIRC has adopted is that of the top 20 British employers in South Africa (in descending order): ConsGold, ICI, Barclays, BP, Standard Chartered, Metal Box, Lonrho, Courtaulds, Pilkington, Unilever, BET, Shell, BTR, BOC, GEC, BAT, NEI, Trafalgar House, GUS.

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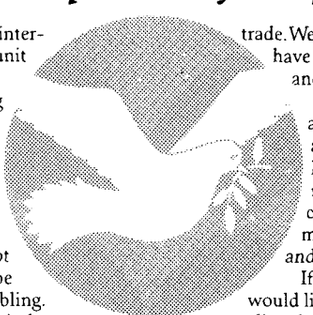

The Fellowship Trust is a new internationally orientated authorised unit trust specifically designed for the growing number of people seeking a broadly-based investment which not only offers them a decent return but also puts their money to work in ways which are compatible with their ethical ideals.

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ECONOMICS

Inside the Glasgow glass envelope

Kirsty Milne

WHAT CAN you do for a city undergoing an economic identity crisis? With dying industrial heartlands, unemployment running above 20 per cent and a reputation for social deprivation which continues to stick? 'Adapt or die' is the response most commonly to be heard in Glasgow, and the result is a remarkable phenomenon — a city in search of a future.

There's no question that Glasgow is in danger of being left behind, a casualty city which just happened to be, in the words of one council official, 'in the wrong place, facing the wrong way, and making the wrong things'. Like the rest of Britain, Glasgow has had to watch the slow decline of its traditional manufacturing base — in shipbuilding, steel and engineering. There are only two shipyards left; the Clyde used to be crucial to Glasgow and now people are saying bitterly that you can fish in it. Manufacturing in Glasgow contracted by 30 per cent between 1978 and 1983, and plants which were once familiar features of the city continue to close.

> *'A casualty city which happened to be in the wrong place, facing the wrong way, making the wrong things'*

The rate of redundancies, which peaked in 1980, is slowing down, but the cumulative result is a bad case of long-term unemployment: latest figures show that of the 77,204 jobless in Glasgow, 9,280 have been out of work for more than six years. Where are the new jobs to come from? The electronics industry clearly isn't the knight on the high-tech charger that's required; it only provides 42,000 jobs in the whole of Scotland, and besides, computer companies have tended to locate in other parts of 'Silicon Glen', especially New Towns.

To the rescue come Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Development Agency (SDA), both of which have put their faith in the service sector as the only realistic area for growth in employment. To this end there's been a lot of emphasis on improving the quality of the city centre, which is visibly in the process of turning itself inside out. The whole area known as Merchant City, with its extravagant Victorian facades, is being redeveloped to provide shops, offices and up to 2,000 homes as bait for Glasgow yuppies. South of Argyle St a huge site awaits a glass envelope which will protect a shopping centre, an ice rink and a multi-storey car park from the incessant Scottish rain in the £62m St Enoch's development. Even the old fish market, the Briggait, has been turned into glossy umbrella forstalls and specialist shops, though with a view across the Clyde to the Gorbals it looks as much like Covent Garden as a fish out of water.

Nevertheless, Donald Dewar, Shadow Scottish Secretary and MP for Glasgow Garscadden, describes the general atmosphere with the greater precision: 'the place is hopping'. And much of the hopping takes place under the careful eyes of the council and the SDA, working to combine public spending with private investment in as many projects as possible. The SDA is a unique phenomenon (and the Treasury would like it to stay that way): a semi-independent, government-funded organisation set up by Harold Wilson in 1975 to do something about the Scottish economy. As a leading industrial landlord with a gross annual budget of more than £130m, the SDA is much respected by the 200 or so people who make up the Scottish establishment for being hard-headed and commercially-minded. Not surprising, then, that a Treasury review last month criticised the SDA for being too interventionist. Certainly it has a finger in innumerable pies — in Glasgow alone it put money into the Scottish Conference and Exhibition Centre, initiated the GEAR project to put money into the East End of Glasgow, and is managing the 1988 Glasgow Garden Festival through a wholly-owned subsidiary.

Last year it set up a new group, Glasgow Action, to promote the city as a business location and the dynamic young director, David Macdonald, is as much interested in the music business as in merchant banks (Glasgow, remember, produced not only Ultravox and Simple Minds but the Associates and Strawberry Switchblade as well). His organisation has specific targets: relieving Glasgow of its status as a 'branch economy' (i.e. attracting more company HQs to Glasgow — Britoil was a recent success); improving air links with Europe and the USA; developing Glasgow's tourist industry (the Burrell Collection, opened in 1983, has now overtaken Edinburgh castle as Scotland's top tourist attraction).

> *'There are only two shipyards left; the Clyde used to be crucial to Glasgow and now people are saying bitterly that you can fish in it'*

HOWEVER, THERE's nothing he can teach Glasgow City Council about selling the city; after all, for three years now Mr Happy has been seen on London buses proclaiming 'Glasgow's Miles Better' and the campaign has been given a boost since Glasgow won the British nomination for European City of Culture in 1990. Macdonald describes the council as 'solidly socialist and very pragmatic with it . . . the city's interests always come first'. Perhaps it's the pragmatism born of numerical supremacy (the Labour group has 50 councillors to the Conservatives' 5, and a visiting Hackney councillor was reputedly shocked when she saw how cosily collusive they all were).

The council needs its pragmatism when it comes to housing; as the biggest landlord in Europe it has the dubious distinction of presiding over some of the worst council housing in Britain: an estimated 10,000 homes in Glasgow don't have a bath. Government spending restrictions have limited the council's capital spending to modernisation and planned repairs, so it's small wonder that they should be encouraging private developers and housing associations to build and convert more homes — even selling council houses to tenants in the deprived suburb of Easterhouse. But the core of the housing problem remains the post-war estates built on the periphery of the city: Pollok, Castlemilk, Easterhouse and Drumchapel. Almost one in four of the unemployed in Glasgow lives there.

What will the expansion of the service sector do for those one in four? Will it pick up the long-term unemployed? Retailing and office work may be as subject to mechanisation and contraction of numbers in the future as manufacturing has been in the past. There are some economists who would argue that, anyway, the growth of the service sector goes hand in hand with the growth of manufacturing industry. In Glasgow, Donald Dewar speaks of the need for a 'balanced economy' with 'a core of manufacturing industry which is competitive'. Campbell Christie, General Secretary of the STUC, is also unhappy about over-reliance on the service sector. He would like to see Glasgow's traditional areas of manufacturing, including the shipyards, sustained; new industries developed; and a major programme of expenditure on housing and construction projects to provide jobs and tackle Glasgow's decaying infrastructure.

> *'A depressing scenario suggests itself — that of a pepped-up city centre, a flourishing service-sector and, on the periphery, the long-term, marginalised unemployed'*

Earlier this month, the Invisible Export Council confirmed that employment in the UK service sector isn't likely to increase substantially and won't compensate for jobs lost in manufacturing industry. But even if the service sector does represent the only real possibility for growth in Glasgow (and it's worth pointing out that it's remained more or less static since 1971), a depressing scenario suggests itself — that of a pepped-up city centre, a flourishing service sector and, on the periphery, the long-term, marginalised unemployed. In microcosm, it could be what's in store for the British economy as a whole: 87 per cent of us in work and getting richer — and the rest out in the cold. □

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'The most important secrets ever known to mankind'

The atom bomb spies — the Rosenbergs, Fuchs, Donald Maclean and others — gave the Soviet Union the secrets of the American bomb. Or did they? Drawing on new sources, some from Soviet archives,* PHILLIP KNIGHTLEY *suggests that the American spy scare that followed the explosion of the first Russian A-bomb originated in a CIA intelligence failure

ON 29 AUGUST 1949, as dawn broke over Kazakhstan, Central Asia, a huge mushroom-shaped cloud blossomed skywards. Four years after the United States had exploded the world's first atomic bomb, the Soviet Union had entered the nuclear world. President Truman refused to believe first reports of the explosion until presented with radioactive rainwater samples from contaminated clouds.

Americans were stunned and frightened. They could not understand how a country ravaged by war could produce an atomic bomb in such a short time. How could the Soviet Union take one of the most important weapons decisions this century, implement that decision, and succeed in its aims without the Central Intelligence Agency knowing about it? Worse, how could American intelligence be so faulty as to insist that a Russian atomic bomb was ten to 20 years away — the greatest miscalculation of the Cold War?

There was a chorus of protests. The director of the CIA, Admiral Roscoe Hillenkoetter, took the blame and was eventually replaced by General Walter Bedell Smith. The CIA's failure to detect that the Soviet Union would build a bomb so quickly was explained away by saying that the original estimates of ten to 20 years before Russia got the bomb were correct, but had been invalidated by Soviet espionage rings in the United States which had 'stolen the most important secrets ever known to mankind and had delivered them to the Soviet Union.'

There was no evidence, at that time, that any atom espionage rings existed, but this did not stop Congressman Richard Nixon from initiating the hunt for them by writing in the New York *Journal American* demanding that President Truman reveal 'the facts about the espionage ring which was responsible for turning over information on the atom bomb to agents of the Russian government'.

J. Edgar Hoover ordered the FBI to find these spies and the United States was soon swept up in a massive spy scare that was to lead in 1953 to the execution for treason of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. There, and in Britain, a number of atom spies were caught, tried and imprisoned. Others, accused or about to be accused, fled to the Soviet Union. What did these spies give away? How did they help the Soviet Union to develop the atomic bomb, and what could the CIA have learnt about its development?

SOVIET SCIENTISTS were early entrants in the atomic race, realising as early as 1939, as did their counterparts in other countries, that an atomic bomb had become a theoretical possibility. Igor Kurchatov, later hailed as the father of the Soviet atomic bomb, and a group of young researchers, including Georgy Nikolayovich Flyorov (who was to play an amazing role in the Soviet bomb programme) were urging a crash development of atomic research early in 1940 — a full year before the American programme began.

Early in 1941 these scientists put it to the Soviet government that it might be possible to create an atomic bomb far more powerful than any existing conventional bomb. But before the government had responded, the German invasion brought all Soviet nuclear research to a halt.

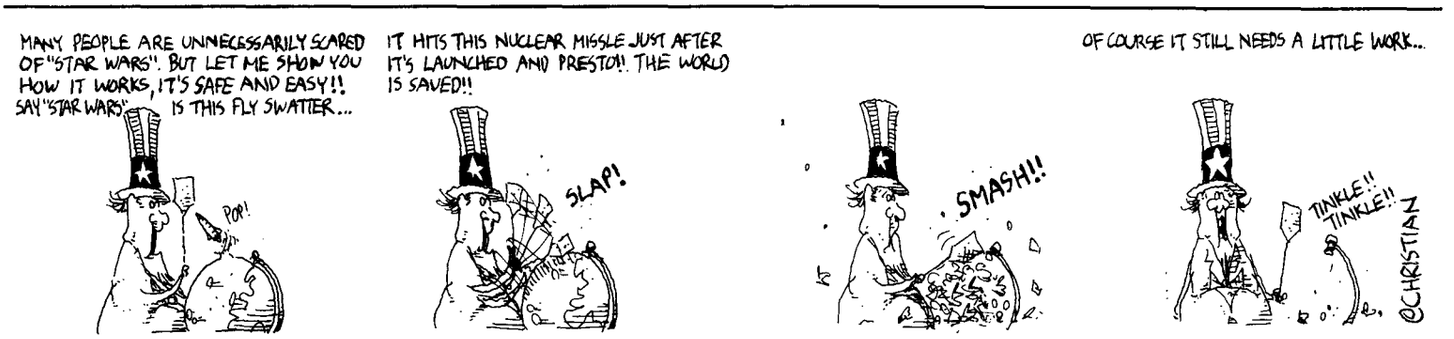
Immediately after the German invasion Kurchatov decided to abandon work on nuclear fission. The laboratory was closed down and most of his younger scientists joined the armed forces. Flyorov went into the Soviet Air Force from where this 28-year-old lieutenant bombarded Kurchatov, the State Defence Committee in Moscow, and members of the Academy of Science with letters urging that nuclear fission research be resumed. But by now, the German army was on the outskirts of Moscow and the very survival of the Soviet Union was in doubt; he did not receive a reply.

> ***'A single demand of you comrades,' said Stalin. Provide us with atomic weapons in the shortest possible time. You know that Hiroshima has shaken the whole world. The equilibrium has been destroyed. Provide the bomb — it will remove a great danger to us.'***

But the young lieutenant did not give up his interest in atomic research and when he was posted to an air base at Voronezh in February 1942, he took the opportunity to visit the university library where there was a comprehensive and up-to-date stock of Western scientific journals. What he found there dismayed and alarmed him.

Back in 1940 Flyorov and a colleague had published an account of the spontaneous fission of uranium and had been nominated for a Stalin Prize for their work. But the award had been refused on the ground that Western scientists had shown no interest whatsoever in the discovery, not even responding to Flyorov's paper on it in the July 1940 issue of *Physical Review*. Puzzled by this silence — for, before the war, physics was perhaps the most international of the sciences - Flyorov spent hours ploughing through the scientific journals.

What the Stalin Prize referee had said was true: there was *nothing* about Flyorov's work. But then Flyorov suddenly realised *that there was nothing*


MANY PEOPLE ARE UNNECESSARILY SCARED OF "STAR WARS". BUT LET ME SHOW YOU HOW IT WORKS, IT'S SAFE AND EASY!! SAY "STAR WARS" IS THIS FLY SWATTER...
POP!
IT HITS THIS NUCLEAR MISSLE JUST AFTER IT'S LAUNCHED AND PRESTO!! THE WORLD IS SAVED!!
SLAP!
SMASH!!
OF COURSE IT STILL NEEDS A LITTLE WORK...
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about nuclear fission at all. All the great names in the field — Fermi, Szilard, Teller, Anderse, Wheiler, Wigner — had completely vanished from all the journals. Flyorov drew the only possible conclusion: nuclear research in the United States had been made a state secret because its scientists were working on an atomic bomb. (He was not quite right. American scientists themselves had decided in April 1940 not to publish papers on nuclear fission, fearing that they might help Germany to develop an atomic bomb.)

Flyorov, though a junior officer, decided to write to Stalin, setting out the evidence and his conclusions, saying that it was vital to the Soviet Union that no time should be lost in building an atomic bomb. He was called to Moscow for consultations. Some senior scientists had an uncomfortable interview with Stalin who wanted to know how it was that a junior lieutenant at the front had seen the danger to the Soviet Union, while his scientific advisers had not. The scientists had to admit to Stalin — who might well have had them shot had he not needed them so badly — that work on an atomic bomb *was* probably going on not only in the United States and Britain, but in Germany as well.

Yet, even now, the Soviet atom bomb project did not proceed with any high degree of urgency. This only came when the United States used the bomb against Japan. Now Stalin got the message: America had a powerful weapon; it alone possessed it; it was prepared to use it to achieve its political objectives. He summoned the People's Commissar of Munitions, his deputies, and Kurchatov to the Kremlin. 'A single demand of you, comrades,' said Stalin. 'Provide us with atomic weapons in the shortest possible time. You know that Hiroshima has shaken the whole world. The equilibrium has been destroyed *(ravnovesie narushilos)*. Provide the bomb — it will remove a great danger to us.'

THE RACE for the Soviet bomb was now on. We have seen how the atom spies played no part in the early development of the Soviet bomb— the vital knowledge that the West was developing a bomb came from Flyorov. (He was rewarded for his Sherlock-Holmes detective work. A Lenin Prize winner and a member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, he has for the past 28 years headed the Laboratory of Nuclear Reactions in Dubna.) Did the atom spies now play a major role in helping speed up the Soviet bomb?

THE SECRET DOCTRINE

There is a tradition of an Ancient Wisdom relevant, however, to any age and people. It tells of the eternal verities of existence, of Universal processes and laws which are of the nature of Nature herself — of whom we are all part.

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First, it must be appreciated that the chances of keeping secret the most important single piece of scientific information about the bomb — that it worked — were absolutely nil after Hiroshima. Further, in August 1945, the US government released the Smythe Report on Atomic Energy for Military Purposes. The Soviet Union, anxious to get Soviet industry behind the bomb project, rushed through a translation of the report and published and distributed 30,000 copies within six months.

As for the spies themselves, we can eliminate the Rosenbergs immediately. As David Holloway of the University of Edinburgh and the Center for International Security and Arms Control, Stanford University, California, puts it, 'I've never seen anything to suggest that the Rosenbergs told the Russians anything of value about the atomic bomb.' Donald Maclean may have been able to tell the Russians about political differences between Britain and the United States on atomic energy matters and to provide them with organisational details about both countries' atomic energy programmes, but he was not in a position to tell them anything that would help them speed up production of their own atomic weapons.

> ***'It was not the fact that the Soviet Union had developed the atomic bomb that caused panic in American intelligence, it was the CIA's own failure to predict when this would occur.'***

That leaves us with the spy who is generally considered to have been the most important to the Soviets and the most damaging to the West, Klaus Fuchs, who worked on both the British and American atomic bomb projects.

Fuchs's value

There is little indication in Soviet sources of what actually happened to Fuchs's reports. David Holloway says that his extensive researches leave the issue unclear except for the following item: 'In one of his confessions Fuchs notes that questions had come back to him from the Soviet Union about the derivation of the Bethe-Feynman formula for estimating bomb efficiency. Fuchs had passed on the formula, which was basically a heuristic device, and evidently it had reached the appropriate Soviet physicists.'

As to Fuchs's value to the Russians, Holloway cannot reach a positive conclusion. He says that Fuchs did provide potentially useful information. Some of this the Soviet scientists already knew or would have discovered. 'But I think it is hard to dismiss it as worthless, especially as it gave the Soviet authorities some indication of what the Americans were up to. The estimates I have (from scientists who worked with Fuchs) suggest that he might have saved the Russians as much as a year or 18 months in building the atomic bomb.'

To sum up: the atomic spies, unforgivable though their treachery may have been, did not give the atomic bomb to the Soviet Union. They may have advanced the date of the first Soviet bomb, but even this remains doubtful and it would appear to be a matter of months rather than years. Ultimately their actions merely hastened the end of a process as futile as trying to keep secret the discovery of the wheel.

By 1954 Churchill had recognised this. According to a Cabinet paper yet to be released, he said that the tragedy was that the West did not tell the Soviet Union everything it knew about the atomic bomb when the United States still had the monopoly.

IT WAS NOT the fact that the Soviet Union had *developed* the atomic bomb that caused panic in American intelligence, it was the CIA's own failure to predict when this would occur. The CIA owed its very existence to its promise to prevent surprises of this nature — Allen Dulles had specifically assured the 1947 Congressional Committee, whose hearings had led to the founding of the agency, that the CIA would know 'if some people across the seas' had managed to develop an atomic bomb and were prepared to use it.

There was no excuse for this major intelligence failure. A study of the files of *Izvestia*, for example, would have turned up an article on 21 December 1940 naming numerous Soviet scientists, including Kurchatov, who were engaged on nuclear research. There was evidence that Kurchatov had tried to buy a kilo of refined uranium from the Nazis in 1940. The brilliant Danish nuclear scientist, Niels Bohr, had told President Roosevelt on 26 August 1944 that the Russians knew that the United States was making great efforts to develop an atomic bomb, that the Russians were themselves studying the matter, would be free to increase their efforts when Germany was defeated, and that they would probably obtain the German secrets.

Given all the available information, any competent nuclear scientist would have realised that intelligence predictions of no Soviet bomb for ten to 20 years were ludicrous. As with Pearl Harbour, all the relevant facts were floating around the United States waiting for someone to collate and evaluate them — the CIA's real job.

But the device of shifting the blame for this intelligence failure to betrayal from within, allowed the CIA not only to survive, but actually to expand. When General Bedell Smith took over as director in October 1950 he requested a supplement to the agency's budget for the 1951 financial year. The increase, which was granted, was in addition to another very substantial increase given to the agency to enable it to step up operations against the Soviet Union. The shock of the Soviet atomic bomb meant that now virtually anything the CIA asked for was granted. □

Extracted from The Second Oldest Profession: the Spy as Bureaucrat, Patriot, Fantasist and Whore' *by Phillip Knightley, published this week by André Deutsch at £14.95.*

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MEDIA

Being *Independent* still means saying where you stand

Martin Kettle

A NEWSPAPER's identity is shaped by many things. It communicates its values in a thousand ways. But the most explicit and consistent of its political messages is still its leader column.

Leaders may not now be read as reverentially as they once were. Some people even think they are expendable anachronisms. But while they exist they *are* still read. Research shows that about a third of 'quality' paper readers normally look at the leaders every day.

Political columnists, in particular, have made leaders less important. But the leading article remains the voice of the paper. Through it, though he may not actually write it, an editor declares his views (or his proprietor's views) of the world.

At Britain's newest daily, *The Independent*, Andreas Whittam Smith is both editor and co-proprietor. Like most editors, he writes some of his own leaders — mainly on City subjects — while leaving the bulk of the writing to others. Like all editors in this country, he has to approve all the leaders before they go into the paper. Unlike most editors, though, he starts with a clean sheet. His paper is still only six weeks old.

The Independent has tried to present itself as a different kind of paper. Like the *Guardian*, it is deliberately free of proprietorial interference with the leader line. As Whittam Smith put it in the first issue on 7 October: 'We are free to make up our mind on policy issues . . . We will both praise and criticise without reference to a party line'.

That sounds absolutely admirable, and there is no reason to think it is untrue. But a paper with leaders has to have an editorial line nevertheless.

Whittam Smith originally intended *The Independent*'s leaders to be written as much as possible by the paper's specialist journalists. He hired only one chief leader writer and one assistant, planning that they would oversee and edit as well as write. Other papers use their specialists to write leaders, too, but more informally. Whittam Smith intended a more devolved, collegiate system.

In six short weeks, that system has collapsed. The reliance on specialists is being largely abandoned. It has been judged a failure because several specialists have had problems adapting to the peculiar requirements of leader writing and because there have been disagreements with them over leader lines. The assistant leader writer, ex-*Guardian* journalist Jane McLoughlin, has been moved out to the features department, leaving John Torode, also ex-*Guardian*, in sole charge pending a rethink before Christmas.

These backstage problems go some way to explain the sometimes quirky subject selection and the contradictory quality of the early *Independent* leaders.

THE INDEPENDENT's leader column, at 1,100-1,200 words long, is shorter than those of *The Times* and the *Guardian*, the same length as the *Financial Times*, and longer than the now shortened column in the *Daily Telegraph*. It normally carries two pieces, with occasionally a short third.

This constraint of space must be a problem. It means that some good subjects have been overlooked. Foreign leaders are especially few and far between (curious for a paper which prides itself, with good reason, on the breadth of its foreign coverage).

Social policy has suffered, too. There has been little on law and order (with the exception of some good pieces on prisons), the welfare state, transport or local government. And, while there is always a choice to be made, *The Independent* has missed attractive topical subjects which have tempted its competitors, like Brent's suspension of Maureen McGoldrick, reform of the lobby system, the 1992 Olympics decision, the Sinn Fein split and the royal visit to China.

The biggest hole in *The Independent*'s editorial coverage is British party politics. It is not hard to see why. *The Independent* clearly wants to keep its party options as open as possible, especially while it is finding a market.

It goes further than that, though. *The Independent* — as its title implies — makes a virtue of being non-party. Whittam Smith and his top chums have all forsworn party allegiance. Fine. But the newspaper can't run away from the challenge of political comment indefinitely.

Somewhere along the road, it must decide what being independent actually means in Britain today. In my view, it can mean something — but only in a context. That's what we try to do at the *Guardian* — independent but left of centre. Experience there shows that the easy bit about independence is giving independent criticism. The hard bit is giving independent praise. But it has to be done eventually.

> ***'Its general political line is a right-wing Toryism that dares not speak its name and therefore likes to think of itself as SDP'***

The Independent has kept most of these cards close to its chest so far. From what it has revealed, its general political line is a right-wing Toryism that dares not speak its name and therefore likes to think of itself as SDP. One thing, though, is for sure. *The Independent* does not support Labour. Nor does it seem much interested in the questions which left-of-centre people debate. The SDP is part of that debate. *The Independent* isn't.

THE SUBJECT on which its views are extremely clear is the dominant international issue of our time — nuclear weapons. It is a hawkish sceptic about Soviet-American arms control talks and an extremely gung-ho supporter of the case for a new generation of British nuclear weapons.

As Reagan went to Reykjavik, a leader encouraged him to uphold linkage between arms control and human rights. Afterwards, with human rights now on one side and without even mentioning SDI, another leader was very satisfied with the outcome. 'The President of the United States, lame duck or not, is not to be pushed around.'

Since then, the line has stiffened. A few days later, *The Independent* reflected the increasingly articulated view of the British defence chiefs that a zero-zero deal would have been 'a defeat for deterrence, disguised as a victory for arms control'. The planned deal on theatre nuclear forces, the paper said, would be 'profoundly inimical to Europe's security interests'. The paper has reinforced this line in a strongly pro-Owen stance on the SDP-Liberal Alliance defence split and has reached a climax in a leader which urged the British government to authorise the domestic production of a new generation of air-launched nuclear weapons. In this field, *Independent* seems to be shorthand for independent nuclear deterrent.

Elsewhere, the leaders seem thus far to reflect the preoccupations of the *Spectator*-writing classes. There are particular concerns about the church and with race. An early leader came very close to outright opposition to abortion as such. The Anglo-Irish Agreement is barely tolerated. An uncompromising attack on the Peace Pledge Union's white remembrance poppies was indistinguishable (save in length and literacy) from the tabloid hysterics on the same subject. References to liberalism (outside the economic field) are invariably snide and patronising. Leaders on the labour movement tend to be used as opportunities to poke fun (at Les Huckfield's careerism, for instance) rather than to address issues of substance. All these examples suggest that *The Independent*'s leader line emerges from a very prevalent right-wing culture already well represented in Fleet Street and points east.

Sometimes, of course, you can feel the undertow of the writers' decent instincts. The result, though, can be simple confusion. The leaders on theTory party's attempts to destabilise the BBC were particularly guilty of the besetting sin of all leader writers — the attempt to be fair to all sides. Two separate leaders on this subject started out as attacks on Mr Tebbit, but then rapidly degenerated into abuse of the BBC's general news coverage ('anti-Americanism', 'amateur and undisciplined performance', 'specious and irritating', 'dramatic, emotional and simplistic'). The result was a loss of argumentative direction. Leader writers need to remember to keep their eyes on the ball.

But they also need to have passions and prejudices. This column has inevitably focused on *The Independent*'s apparent editorial weaknesses over a short period of time. And people in glass houses shouldn't . . . One area where *The Independent* is an example to the whole British press is in the prominence with which it treats racial injustice. As long as it goes on publishing the kind of leaders it has produced on racial attacks and discrimination, then it will deserve to be treated — at least in that respect — as something new and different in British journalism. □

Martin Kettle is a leader writer on the Guardian.

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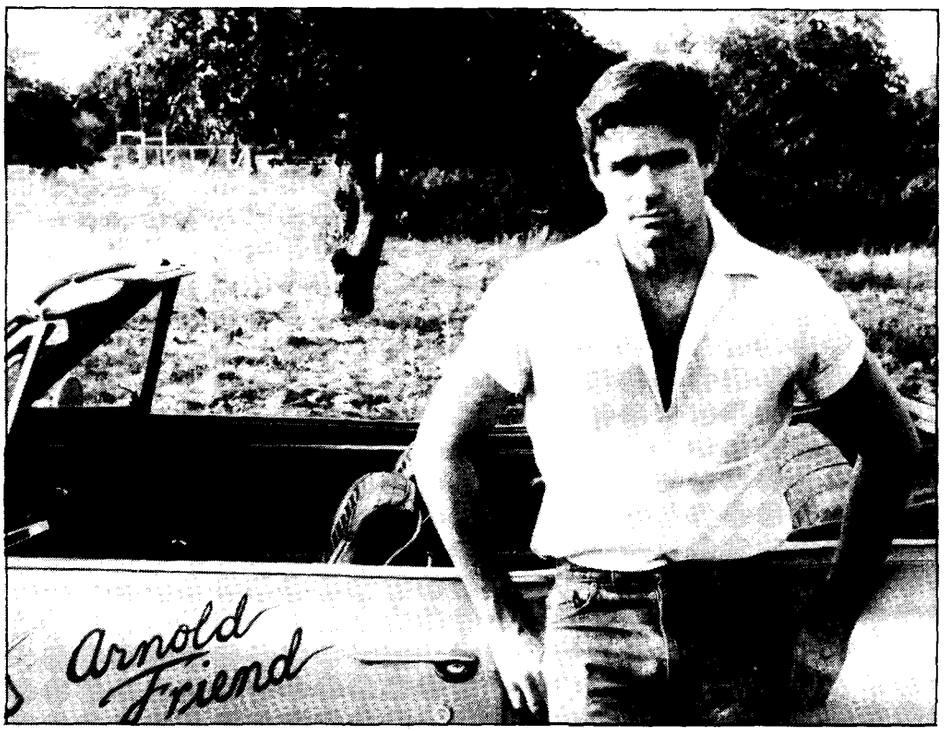
ARTS

CINEMA

Fear and loathing

Judith Williamson

Smooth Talk (15)
Renoir, Russell Square
Extremities (18)
Cannon, ABC and Warner West End



No free rides; no free will. *Smooth Talk*'s invitation to terror

WOMEN'S FUNCTION as a register of terror in movies is nothing new. Being frightening means, almost by definition, frightening a woman: the poster for *The Shining* summed up this classic mechanism in the economical montage of Jack Nicholson with an axe/Shelley Duval screaming. Without the image of the terrified female, the grammar is incomplete: power is a two-way relationship and Jack Nicholson rolling his eyeballs on his own just looks plain dumb. The power of the man is written in the fear of the woman.

In the traditional horror genre, woman screaming or woman fainting acts as a barometer to the horror of whatever the film deals in: ghosts, zombies, monsters, werewolves. However, in the early Eighties a form emerged which used women not merely as vehicles for the frighteningness of other situations, but as the focus of fear in precisely 'their own' situations (e.g. babysitting, in *Hallowe'en*). Most of these films wore their message in their titles — *Don't Answer the Phone, He Knows You're Alone* — and their particular trademark was posing women under threat in domestic space — so that danger results not merely from venturing out of a 'woman's place', but by being in it.

It is perhaps a measure of our supposedly 'post-feminist' times that both *Smooth Talk* and *Extremities* can simultaneously reproduce these structures while purporting either to interrogate or overturn them. **Smooth Talk** starts off as an adolescent-awakening movie, following three high-school girls through their rituals of shopping-mall games, chasing after boys, being misunderstood by their parents. Through this smalltown Californian teenage limbo drifts the central figure of Connie (Laura Dern) whose 'awakening sexuality' is characterised by an aimlessness and lack of affect which give her the appearance of sleepwalking much of the time. This is hardly contradictory since one of the essential qualities of the 'feminine sexuality' she is acquiring is not being fully aware of it (she is 'awakening' to a slumber, as it were) and therefore not being in control.

This lack of awareness and control is presented at once as Connie's downfall, and as an inevitable part of her new identity. At the height of her restlessness and sexual ventures, she annoys her parents by choosing to stay home from a family outing. Once alone, she wanders through the house, turning on radios in every room, dancing, trying on make-up — filling the space both in a narcissistic enjoyment of herself, and in waiting for a hypothetical man. Her activity in this sequence is brutally violated by what comes next, and yet, on the film's more insidious level, can be read as a kind of preparation for it.

For what happens next is that an indescribably slimy older man, Arnold Friend (Treat Williams) drives up (he knows she's alone) and smooth talks (terrorises) her in a very long sequence into getting into his car — presumably to be raped. 'Presumably', because the act itself is never shown, leaving an ambiguity perversely — and irresponsibly — heightened in the US ad which shows Treat Williams and Laura Dern together (an image not found in the movie itself) as if on a date — with the (bizarrely un-fictional) caption 'Laura Dern is in for a treat'.

If this treat is to be raped, it nevertheless is presented as a form of seduction. Nothing really adds up. Connie doesn't go inside immediately, lock the door, and phone her parents or the police. She appears almost hypnotised. The creepily-named Mr Friend knows all about her. Her home is no longer a protection but becomes suddenly flimsy; rickety doors and open windows are sadistically lingered over by the increasingly claustrophobic camera. Arnold Friend is master of external space: Connie, indoors, has none left. In the face of her persecutor she is presented completely without will of her own. One of the effects of showing such lack of resistance is that it suggests, in contradiction to the film's social realist opening, a sort of psychodrama where Arnold Friend appears as the living projection of Connie's own fears and desires. She appears in these sequences as so drained of meaning except as an index of Friend's power, it is as if all her strength, such as it was, has been given over to him as personification of the sexuality she was supposedly discovering. On one level this is a very moral tale about what happens when young girls are left alone. But on another, the fact that Friend represents what Connie both desires and fears (sex) and that she both gets it and is frightened by it (rape) suggests that what women really have to fear is ourselves — it is our own sexuality which appears as a state of perpetual danger.

Extremities is, on the face of it, a reversal of *Smooth Talk* because its heroine (Farrah Fawcett) manages to turn the tables on her attacker and ends up tormenting him. However, both films are structured in two very distinct parts, and the first half of **Extremities** bears a striking resemblance to the second half of *Smooth Talk*. The Farrah Fawcett figure is assaulted in a car park by a man who then comes to her house when she's alone. As in *Smooth Talk*, the setting is daylight domesticity and the attacker saunters in with ease. As in *Smooth Talk*, he knows 'all about' her — startling her with the names of her flat-mates and family. (This insistence on the knowledge of the attacker makes it particularly clear that the absence of anywhere to hide is a psychic as much as a literal component of this scenario — and in case the point isn't clear enough, bird-cages and goldfish bowls abound in the domestic interior.) And as in *Smooth Talk*, she seems (at first) incapable of disobeying him: for perhaps an hour Farrah Fawcett runs through every possible combination of terror and tears as she does everything the man tells her.

Halfway through the film, however, she grabs a flyspray, gets her attacker in the eyes, and from this point takes her revenge, finally forcing him to confess to the attempted rape. Yet this sudden reversal cannot undo what has gone before: instead it allows the film to have its cake and eat it,

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affording the audience both the sadistic terror of the first half and the righteous revenge of the second as its justification.

The real point about both these films is that they employ a mechanism based on the assumption of male power and female vulnerability. Yes, Farrah Fawcett gets the guy in the end, but how did he get in there in the first place? If the home can be seen as the site of traditional femininity, then its representation as inherently penetrable sets up femininity as a space permanently available and assailable, without boundaries, while at the same time presenting it as the only possible place for women. Fortunately, however, it is not a real space. So, frightening as it may seem, we need waste no time imagining that we inhabit it. □

THEATRE

Riddles of the sphinx

Victoria Radin

The Infernal Machine
JEAN COCTEAU *Lyric, Hammersmith*
Country Dancing
NIGEL WILLIAMS *The Other Place, Stratford*

SIMON CALLOW can usually be counted on to toss a few brickbats into the fundamentally sedate and inward-looking world of British theatre. While the attempts of the big institutions at being daring or outrageous have often resulted in kitsch — Richard III as a sort of crutch-propelled tarantula, *King Lear* as a music hall double-act — Callow's own wayward peregrinations towards outrage have led down the more verdant path of high camp. His first big directing effort, Jean Cocteau's **The Infernal Machine**, is almost a textbook specimen of the genre.

Opinions on the play, which stir-fries elements of farce, boulevard, circus and Shakespearean parody into the Oedipus legend, appear to be divided. Francis Steegmuller in his biography of Cocteau notes that the work was a success when first produced in 1934 but dismisses it as 'fairly close to the level of modern situation-comedy': this is, I suppose, worse than soap opera, of which the classical Greek plays might be said to be the first examples. Eric Bentley found in the work 'objectifying' elements similar to those of Brecht. Callow, of course, thinks the play wonderful: in his programme note he calls it a 'masterpiece' and cites its innocence and mystery.

The production is his *homage* to a kindred spirit; and he turns the Voice, or narrator, into a Cocteau-clone in a dinner jacket and bouffant grey hair who smokes a fag as he doomily sets the scene for each of the four acts. His presence quite salutarily places the piece as a work of its time and prepares the way for the first act, a curtain-raising boulevard farce which is certainly on the low side of camp.

Here we see two soldiers on the battlements conversing with the murdered Laius's Ghost. The two boys, clothed in leg-revealing mini-tunics, speak a sort of period demotic ('sweetheart' or 'old codger' in Callow's retranslation of the play) and quite fail to recognise their Queen Jocasta or her companion-soothsayer Tiresias. Robert Eddison plays the seer (called Zizi by his Queen) as a wry, humoured scapegoat; Maggie Smith her Jocasta as an imperious salon hostess ('We-ell, personally I find your chicken entrails ri-di-culous'): both are written as boulevard archetypes, a reversal of expectations.

She leaves the battlements to 'call in at the clubs' (why not? It's more fun than breeding racehorses) and Cocteau then introduces his bizarre, but nearly seemly notion of a Sphinx who is Nemesis alternating in the shape of a young girl and a magnificent bat-winged sculpture, lit by green, black and purple shadows, who hisses a catalogue of imprecations before she succumbs to her human vice of love and lets Oedipus win the queen who is in fact his mother.

Cocteau's depiction of their marriage shows one of the worst wedding nights on record, with Jocasta needing reassurances about her age and the pair, exhausted by the day's festivities alternately dozing off into nightmares. When the revelations are finally made and Oedipus has blinded himself, the pair have been sufficiently humanised, and detoxified of the initial kitscherie, to make Cocteau's final embellishment of the myth very moving. What Charles Lamb did for Shakespeare, Cocteau does for Sophocles — without detracting too much from the horror.

Callow would have done well to cut the play, but he is a proper servant of its mysteries. The lighting by Geoffrey Joyce casts funnels of beams from on high or huge shadows; Bruno Santini's splendid set accommodates both the monolithic scale of the ramparts and the cosily blood-red curtained bedchamber: when, at the end of that act the curtains fell and were sucked below stage by an unseen force there was a palpable gasp from the audience. Veronica Smart's Sphinx changes from a barefoot girl to a winged horror whom references in the play compare to encroaching fascism (and with the talk of plague, seem, like most plays of the Thirties, applicable to us now); Lambert Wilson, the young French film actor, plays Oedipus attractively as a mulish, arrogant and rather disturbingly plump-thighed cross between a film star and an opportunistic yuppie; while Maggie Smith's performance is one of her best of recent years.

Nigel William's new play, **Country Dancing**, is (moderately) sophisticated agit-prop and seems curiously dated. The play moves, very awkwardly, between Cecil Sharp, the folklorist, taking notes on country tunes in 1914, and his supposed namesake, a villainous early capitalist, abusing the workers of newly industrialised England half a century earlier. The pair are both played by Richard Easton, and the inference seems to be that Sharp — who apparently took notes without looking, like an actor's nightmare of a critic — was in his own way an exploiter; though this thread is demolished when Easton, wreathed in that fixed grin of the embarrassed folk person, joins in the dancing of the finale.

Bill Bryden and his team of truly rough folk did this kind of thing a whole lot better in promenade productions. Here director Bill Alexander gets good performances from Gerard Murphy and Christopher Ashley; decent music (designer Bill Dudley mans the squeezebox, unannounced) and a certain amount of genteel good will which just can't make the enterprise go. □

TELEVISION

Coronation streets

Hugo Williams

IT WAS INTERESTING to compare last week the parallel development of two similar British institutions, the Royal Family and Television. As part of the continuing anniversary of something or other we had **The Story of Royal Broadcasting** (BBC1), **Television and No. 10** (BBC2) and **Television and Foreign Reporting** (BBC2), the last of which amounted to the story of TV's own royal dynasty, the mighty Dimblebys.

The first furry flickers of Princess Marina's wedding smiles in 1922 are like the hesitant beginnings of Royalty as we know it today: gracious but humble, glamorous but humdrum. George V, 'Grandpa England', was the first royal voice to reach the Empire on wireless in 1932. His son David struck out the word 'wireless' from his many broadcasts and inserted the more modern-sounding 'radio'. He was the first royal to be televised and in return the BBC was the last to acknowledge the rumours of his abdication, rife in Fleet Street. When they did, 'The dulcet tones might have been handling a small fire', said Elizabeth Longford.

The Abdication marked the arrival of the Windsors as fully fledged soap stars. (A recent American film of the Waleses was preceded by fountaining *Dynasty*-style credits.) Reaction came from the left: 'It is undesirable,' said Clement Attlee, 'that the public be given such a false idea of the importance of the Throne.' George VI, like television, withdrew for the duration of the war.

In the early walking out of Royalty with telly, it was thought proper, in keeping with the sexual mores of the day, to avoid close-ups and informal speech. Indeed, until the permissive Sixties, casual conversations with the public were never heard, only seen on TV. It was the Coronation that really legitimised the relationship. Parliament felt they should be kept apart until after the ceremony, but the Queen was more forward: 'Rubbish! Of course they [TV] must come into the Abbey.' And so it was that we were round at Mrs Thing's in June 1952 to watch an old man bring a number of diamonds down on a young woman's head in slow motion. Peter Dimmock was in charge of outside broadcasts and consciously broke the no close-up ruling or we wouldn't have the famous shot of the touchingly top-heavy monarch wobbling down the aisle towards us and her daunting future.

The Coronation changed everything. 'Before the Coronation it was very non-U to say you had a television,' said Dimmock. But by Christmas 1955 even the Queen was admitting that 'My own family often gather round to watch television.' Whereupon we all rushed out and bought one and before long Princess Anne was locked in excruciating conversation with Terry Wogan, and Prince Andy was explaining to Selina Hill the origins of his nickname 'Randy Andy' (nothing to do with sex, of course).

Television and No. 10 (BBC2) was necessarily a more disjointed affair, the purpose of democracy being to swop governments from time to time, that of TV to go on forever. Churchill badly wanted to conquer the medium, but rightly changed his mind

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WORK IN PROGRESS

Death of a black man

Naseem Khan

'THAT'S RIGHT,' confirmed the policeman at the other end of the line, 'he was B.I.D.' 'B.I.D.?' 'Brought in dead.' Death could have occurred in the ambulance, or before, but he was indisputably B.I.D. at King's College Hospital. Number 129 in the Occurrence Book at Brixton Police Station. What sort of epitaph is that for Alfred Fagon, the vital maverick black actor and playwright, dead and no one knew it.

The story of what happened to Alfred Fagon — as it finally emerged — is terrible and sobering. An athletically-built man of 49, and former army middleweight boxing champion, he'd been jogging as usual on the morning of Friday 29 August. Nearing home, he collapsed outside his council flat in Brixton's Lothian Estate; a disabled neighbour, seeing it happen, phoned for an ambulance. But Fagon was dead when he reached hospital. What happened next is the murky part.

As is usual, the hospital phoned the local police who sent a constable (PC Petrie) to sign routine forms. Petrie then went to Lothian Estate but could apparently find no one who knew anything of next-of-kin or friends. He did not try to get into Fagon's flat. Two days later, the hospital started to pressurise the coroner to give permission to dispose of the body.

A few days later, PC Seymour entered Fagon's flat (with the neighbour's key) and found — so he told the coroner — a sparsely furnished place with no indications of close friends or next-of-kin. The coroner then authorised cremation. On 10 September — unknown to his friends, sister, daughter or employer — Alfred Fagon was given a pauper's funeral.

All this is more than a little strange. In the event of a sudden death like this, three groups have the job of finding out whether there is anyone to tell: the hospital welfare department, coroner's office and police. In this case, the first two left the enquiries to the police who clearly failed to pursue them with either enthusiasm or efficiency. They made no attempt on 29 August to get into the flat. When they finally did, days later, they saw fit to ignore the correspondence lying around. (The Arts Council had written to Fagon about a writing bursary. His agent had written to him about appearing in an Athol Fugard play.) They did not make use of Fagon's own address book lying next to the phone.

Or maybe it is not so strange. The message that comes over is loud and clear: here is a single black man, a council tenant, with few possessions. No obvious friends. Add it all up and it comes to someone very low down the status ladder indeed. Not someone to take pains over. Wash your hands of him, sweep him away. And this is exactly what happened.

The spectre of that arbitrary, careless act hung over the Tricycle Theatre the other Sunday. Gathered on stage, crowded together in a sober semi-circle, sat a collection of Fagon's shocked friends and colleagues: actors, writers, directors, musicians, all but a handful of them black. Because Behan's *Hostage* was running there the rest of the week, the group was sitting in its set.

They couldn't have chosen a more appropriate backdrop. Behan's Dublin boarding-house — shabby, impermanent, peripheral — underscored and permeated the feelings of those present.

It also took me back forcibly to twenty years ago, when my sister Shamin died. When her unhappy marriage had broken up, she'd moved into a single bed-sitter in Earl's Court. It was this room that I had to go and clear out when Shamin, still a young woman, died of a heart attack. It was the anonymity of it all that overwhelmed me — the pokey one-person room, the string shopping bag with only enough potatoes and aubergines in it for one, the saris crumpled at the bottom of the wardrobe because there was no one much around to take care for. To die like this, I thought, alone and no one knowing. Whatever the faults of the Third World, of India and Pakistan where Shamin grew up — no Edens, either of them — at least there is not this appalling invisibility. There you are part of a structure.

On stage at the Tricycle, the mood is sombre, interspersed with bits of poignant laughter with enactment of scenes from some of Fagon's six plays: *Lonely Cowboy*, his last to be performed (Tricycle, 1985), *Number 11 Josephine House*, his first (Almost Free, 1972), *Death of a Black Man* (1975). There's music and singing and some tributes that are both honest and affectionate. But it is not a performance, more of a family wake — a way of making sure everybody knows what Fagon did with his big untidy talent (the taut and delicate poems are, by contrast, a revelation), and a way of coming together for support and reassurance too.

It was weeks before Fagon's death became public knowledge. When he didn't turn up at the BBC for rehearsals of a play in which he'd been due to act, his agent, unable to raise him by phone, eventually called the police. She was told Alfred Fagon was not only dead but cremated too. Had it not been for those rehearsals, we still might not have known.

'Somewhere along the line,' said fellow playwright Mustafa Matura drily, 'the system broke down. The reason, I assume, is that the police assumed he was just another black man.' □

Next week: Six Bullets *in Bedford, writing from hospital.*

when he saw his screen tests and called it 'a tuppeny Punch and Judy Show' in pique. Eden with his famous good looks had no such doubts. The sleeves of his black jacket fitting his armpits like a glove, he faced a deferential and rehearsed Leslie Mitchell, who confessed that he had been hoping 'to find someone cleverer than me'.

When Eden met his Suez he was the first PM to address the public on TV but not the last to believe that those commies at the BBC were shining the lights in his eyes. He was vain, we kept being told, and couldn't read his notes and had to have his glasses on, which made him look dithery, which indeed he was. When he heard Bevan's 'too stupid to be a Prime Minister speech' he apparently exploded. What with **The Secrets of Suez** (BBC2) appearing this same week, Eden's stock could hardly sink lower.

Macmillan was far more debonair. He treated the whole thing like country house charades, where everyone puts on a funny hat (a white fur one, for example). He was the first to remark on the brash new ITN's habit of lurking in airport lounges. 'You get off the plane exhausted and there is that hot, pitiless, probing eye to welcome you. You put up your hand to shade your eyes and there you are next day looking weary, worried and old over a caption suggesting you are probably past it.' His wit proved he was above it all, though.

ITN was apparently 'light years ahead of the BBC' in the early days and *Panorama* and *Tonight* were Auntie's attempt to fight back. **In Television and Foreign Reporting** (BBC2) Jonathan Dimbleby introduced clips of his avuncular father, whose central presence 'embodied *Panorama's* integrity.' We saw the polished Woodrow Wyatt strolling an assassin's route in Nicosia, then his interview with 'Macca-Rius' as Churchill always called him. The interview makes interesting viewing today, appearances neatly cancelling verbal content. Churchill wanted it banned, as interfering with diplomatic efforts on Cyprus, but the Governor General stood firm. He saw the interview , thought Makarios looked shifty (as indeed he did) and insisted the programme go out. It was the first cut at the umbilical. From then on, TV, like radio, would proceed under the illusion, at least, of impartiality. □

POP

Sick or sweet

Simon Reynolds

THERE'S A CURRENT left orthodoxy that assumes that black music, because it's the voice of 'the street', has some kind of natural link with socialism. Hip hop is a problem for this Red Wedge worldview. Here's a black subculture that confronts racism and economic oppression not with a redemptive vision of solidarity, equality and humanity, but with a survivalist mentality, a masculine self-sufficiency. Hip hop's community is based around a spectacle of pathological individualism. Rappers strive to do each other down in a strange caricature of capitalism's war of all against all.

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A good example is the solipsistic masterpiece that is the debut LP by **Schoolly D** (Rhythm King). Schoolly D inhabits a blank, nihilistic universe, where the only authority is the self, where the only goals are making the 'sucker-ass niggers' feel small, and acquiring the status symbols of 'sophistication' — gold, designer clothes, drugs, 'fine ladies'. Musically Schoolly D and partner DJ Code Money take hip hop beyond dance, to a point where the only comparisons are with the brutality and minimalism of avant-garde groups like Throbbing Gristle and Swans. Most rappers bully the listener, but Schoolly is too cool for that, lets his voice swagger, slurring the words in an intoxication of narcissism and contempt. What's the pleasure in submitting to all this? There's a vertiginous, vicarious sense of psychic extremity, an appeal to something unpleasant in all of us . . .

Some would find it disturbing to realise that black male youth doesn't identify with wholesome, right-on singers like Junior Giscombe, but with the likes of Run DMC, whose philosophy is: 'If I ain't winning, if I ain't right there at the top looking down at the rest . . . I have to win.' More evidence: **Mixmaster Gee's** 'The Manipulator' on *Electro 14* (Streetsounds). Here prowess on the turntables is swollen into a sick, compelling fantasy of omnipotence. The rapper sounds drunk with power. His voice snarls right up in your face. The bass crushes you underfoot. What kind of an *entertainment* is this? Simply, what's being sold is a megalomaniac fantasy, for the powerless.

A characteristic of modern black pop is its willingness to be un-black, to thieve in all directions. **Mantronix**, on their new LP *'Who Is It'* (10 Records), filch from sources as diverse as Glenn Miller and *The Old Grey Whistle Test* theme tune. Their greatest debt, though, is to the fleshless, soulless electropop of **Kraftwerk**, who are as pristinely metronomic as ever on *Electric Cafe* (EMI).

The Beastie Boys migrate in the opposite direction, three white hardcore punks from Brooklyn who are infatuated with B-Boy slang and attitude. On *Licensed To Ill* (Def Jam) they splice and dice beats and rap with Sabbath and Zeppelin riffs, to devastating effect. Of course, they're obnoxious, loudmouth boors ('some voices got treble/some voices got bass/we got the kind of voices that are IN YOUR FACE.') and their objectionable lyrics revolve around beer and cursing and crack and grossing out on White Castle's cheeseburgers and disrespectin' girls. But there's a brattish exuberance and musical mischief that I'm not strict enough to shun. If I wanted to get pretentious I could argue that this is a radical kind of vileness, I could talk about the politics of the Slob, about how hip hop refuses yuppie health and self-improvement, says 'this is me in all my beastliness and bad habits'. About how hip hop inverts values so that 'treacherous' and 'ill' and 'chilly' are good things to be. I could say all this, but that would be an ingenious and disingenuous way of rationalising away shame.

The Beastie Boys are an exception. White rock grows ever more inbred, mining the narrow seam of its own past. *C86* (Rough Trade), a *New Musical Express* compilation of new British indiepop shows how the beatnik delinquency of influences like The Velvet Underground, Byrds, Beefheart, has been replaced by a stay-at-home Englishness. The common sensibility seems to be a

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desire to reconstruct 'innocence' — hence the obsession with childhood and with the Sixties. Best of this spindly breed are the insolent **Wolfhounds** and all-girl group **We've Got A Fuzzbox And We're Gonna Use It**, whose tomboy boisterousness can also be enjoyed on *Love is The Slug* (WEA).

Indie groups tend to take the alienation and doubt of adolescence as a kind of 'truth' that's lost in adulthood's selling-out to comfort and complacency and certainty. The accusation levelled at The Smiths — of glamourising misery and failure — is gloriously true. Here are two more groups that succeed in romanticising dereliction of the soul. On *Your Funeral . . . My Trial* (Mute) **Nick Cave** reinvents downtrodden musics like blues and country, finding in the Deep South an appropriate backdrop for his tales of ruin and obsession and revenge. **The Band of Holy Joy's** *Who Snatched the Baby?* (Flim Flam) is the latest in a series of brilliantly lugubrious waltzes and shanties, folk music infected with a contemporary sense of rootlessness and disorientation.

And therein lies the difference between black and white pop. White bohemian rock is downwardly-aspiring, looking to the past for roots, for the lost 'real' of suffering. Black pop takes conventional upward aspirations, conventional sexual protocol, and turns them into a cartoon utopia. There's a vast chasm between white rock and black pop, but if you're schizophrenic enough you can get something out of both. □

CLASSICAL

Compact clarity

Andrew Clements

THE EXPLOSION of compact-disc releases in the last year has made it almost impossible to keep track of every desirable release and reissue. It's often the transfers of venerable old recordings to the new format that are the most rewarding, and it would be possible to fill an entire review with important performances that have gained immeasurably from the added clarity and detail which CD affords them. Three will have to be sufficient.

EMI has begun to reactivate its unrivalled back catalogue with a clutch of Adrian Boult's recordings of English music; perhaps the most interesting so far is his 1976 version of **Elgar's Dream of Gerontius**, generously coupled on two CDs with *The Music Makers* (EMI CDS 7472088). The soloists are Nicolai Gedda, Helen Watts and Robert Lloyd, and apart from being the only version of Elgar's masterpiece available on CD so far, it's also arguably the most satisfying of all recorded performances, without a weakness in any department. Other conductors, most notably Barbirolli and Britten, may have illuminated specific aspects of the score more intensely than Boult, but his grip on every element is so assured, his sense of the drama so sustained that the individual frissons offered by other conductors come to seem less significant.

Frissons of a very different order abound in Georg Solti's 1968 recording of **Strauss's Elektra** (Decca 417 345-2, two CDs) with Birgit Nilsson massively dominant in the title role. At that time Solti's approach was at its most vivid and savage, and was ideally suited to this of all operas. It's hard to imagine a production that could generate more claustrophobic terror, and with digital sound every effect becomes that much more real and threatening; the supporting singers — Regina Resnik, Tom Krause, Marie Collier — are hardly less impressive than Nilsson. From Decca too is the latest compilation from its extensive **Britten** archive: an unashamedly popular coupling of **The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra** with the *Simple Symphony* and the Frank Bridge Variations (417 509-2) that nevertheless demonstrates the incisiveness of Britten as a conductor, and the mastery of technique that he lavished upon any musical task. The performances — especially that of the English Chamber Orchestra in the Variations — are impeccable.

Totally new releases that match such a level of achievement are necessarily rare. But Olaf Bär's versions of **Schumann's Dichterliebe** and Op. 39 **Liederkreis** (EMI CDC 7473972) constitute one of the most impressive *Lieder* records of recent years and establish Bär as a baritone of the highest quality. His phrasing seems utterly instinctive, his expressive weighting perfectly judged; those who admire Fischer-Dieskau's highly personalised readings of these cycles may find Bär just too neutral, but there is a case for a less self-regarding approach, and here it is made as eloquently as one could imagine.

More highly distinguished **Schumann** comes from the violinist Gidon Kremer accompanied by Martha Argerich in the A minor and D minor **Violin Sonatas** (Deutsche Grammophon 419 235-2). The works themselves are not top-quality Schumann, and they require precisely the kind of high-profile advocacy they get here, with Kremer matched by a pianist who is more than his equal in her ability to imprint every element of her performance with unforgettable individuality. For the duration of the disc at least one really believes one is listening to great music.

Ivo Pogorelich belongs to much the same individualist school as Argerich, but for all its manifest talent his pianism as yet is more wilful, the results less satisfying. The start of a series of **Bach** recordings, however, in the shape of two of the **English Suites** (Deutsche Grammophon 415 480-2), suggests that in some areas of the repertory he is capable of bridling his impulsiveness and producing more considered, sometimes illuminating performances. There are moments in his Bach playing which suggest the influence of Glenn Gould, though Pogorelich withholds the intellectual steel that made Gould so compelling. Jorge Bolet's **Liszt**, on the other hand, is a far more familiar quantity: the seven discs released on Decca so far are one of the most important collection of piano recordings of the last decade. The latest instalment to appear contains the complete **Transcendental Studies** (Decca 414 601-2): marvellously detailed, unflamboyant interpretations, far removed from conventional bravura styles, favouring beauty of tone over physical impact.

Though the transfer of much of Colin Davis's **Berlioz** cycle to CD by Philips has been announced, **Roméo et Juliette** has yet to appear, and meanwhile a new account from Charles Dutoit and the Montreal Symphony (Decca 417 302-2, two CDs) fills an important niche. It is not ideal; the singing of the mezzosoprano Florence Quivar is a acquired taste, and Dutoit tends to let the tension slacken from time to time. But the orchestral and choral contributions are first rate, and the set also includes a substantial makeweight in the shape of Berlioz's *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale*. □

JAZZ

Evergreens and blues

Charles Fox

CONCERTS BY Duke Ellington's Orchestra were always predictable. One of the traditional happenings was the medley, slotting together seven or eight of Ellington's best-known tunes, with the composer sounding frisky at the piano. A special irritant for hard-core fans, distressed to find their hero straying from his true destiny, would be the arrival on-stage of the band's male singer, nakedly schmaltzy. Sterner zealots even resented Duke's soft-soaping of the audience, but that was to underestimate irony.

All these phenomena surface again on a previously unissued recording of a performance in California: **The 1953 Pasadena Concern** (PRT NCP 708). Yet the music is gripping — and not only because the the programme included a couple of Ellington's more ambitious pieces — 'The Tattooed Bride' and 'Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue' (not until the 1956 Newport Festival did the latter turn into a tiresome marathon for the tenor saxophonist Paul Gonsalves). A former Ellington bassist, Oscar Pettiford, plucks a cello throughout a rampaging 'Perdido' ('Everyone look handsome', Ellington exhorts the musicians off-mike as the applause surges). All in all a splendidly authentic reminder of what used to go on: stirring, affectionate, musically most satisfying.

A similar recycling of former triumphs — 'Caldonia', 'Four Brothers' — went on whenever a new Woody Herman band got launched. But **50th Anniversary Tour** (Concord CJ-302), recorded last March and celebrating Herman's half-century as a bandleader, springs a surprise by concentrating on entirely fresh material. Much of it is the work of John Fedchock, an arranger who also happens to lead the trombones and take solos that are velvety yet agile. But the band is packed with unknown young soloists. Names will not mean much, yet one worth noting is Frank Tiberi, still only 17 but already a tenor saxophonist with presence.

Few of the musicians in Loose Tubes were particularly well known when the band got together, but the past 18 months have changed that. The first LP is now followed up by **Delightful Precipices** (Loose Tubes LTLP 003), still irreverent but even more substantial. Django Bates's 'Säd Africa', its perky opening theme stated by tuba and penny whistle, cultivates a kind of African swagger that harks back to the heyday of Chris McGregor's Brotherhood of Breath. Steve Berry's 'Shelley' starts romantically, then adds bulk, provoking a lissom duet by two saxophonists, Iain Ballamy (soprano) and Mark

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Lockheart (tenor). Dai Pritchard's clarinet playing in 'Sosbun-Brakk' cultivates Pee Wee Russell's croakiness and Jimmy Guiffre's fondness for middle and lower registers.

Readers frustrated by the fact that Sonny Rollins's concert in London (reviewed in last week's *NS*) was a one-off event, should rush to get **The Solo Album** (Milestone M9137) — no bass, no drums, nobody else at all. Recorded just over a year ago, it has the saxophonist flitting from theme to theme; playing abstractly, you might say, but digressing into a snatch of Dvorak's *New World* or 'The Lady's In Love With You', even — very briefly — 'The Blue Danube'. Highly bracing, with only a few longueurs. No longueurs at all, indeed something close to perfection, can be found on an LP by the tenor saxophonist who remains one of Rollins' heroes. **The High and Mighty Hawk** (Affinity AFF 163) is a reissue of a recording made nearly 30 years ago by Coleman Hawkins, with Buck Clayton (trumpet) and a rhythm section including Hank Jones (piano) and Ray Brown (bass). The music ranges from a resonant exploration of 'My One And Only Love' to — the real masterpiece — Hawkins taking 17 twelve-bar choruses in 'Bird of Prey Blues'.

Sheila Jordan more or less made her name by singing a slow-motion version of 'You Are My Sunshine' on a George Russell LP in 1962. Her approach is reminiscent of Spanish *cante hondo*, full of microtones, of tiny variations of pitch and phrasing, but all deployed for emotional ends. In recent times her material — mostly unfamiliar 'originals' — has not always suited her style. On **The Crossing** (Black-Hawk BKH 50501) she returns to what she does best, interpreting 'standards' of one sort or another — Miles Davis' 'Little Willie Leaps' as well as 'You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To' — plus an autobiographical blues, closer to white talking blues than to either black country or classic blues.

The two earliest — and greatest — classic blues singers have just reappeared on LPs. In **Ma Rainey: Complete Recordings, August 1924 to July 1925** (VJM VLP82), the singer surmounts the primitive methods of Paramount's Chicago recording studio, using a declamatory style honed in Southern tent shows and the black vaudeville circuit. The New York sessions have better sound; also — on three titles — the 23-year-old Louis Armstrong turns up as an accompanist, keeping himself tactfully in the background. Ma Rainey sings of domestic tragedy, of the 'good man' who suddenly ups and goes. A similar catalogue of disaster emerges on **Bessie Smith: Great Original Performances 1925-1933** (BBC REB 602), this time with the original 78s transferred — and most successfully — to digital stereo. Twelve years younger than Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith brought to blues a simmering intensity, an approach that was more personal than the older singer's. This selection shows how she could subjugate pop songs ('Alexander's Ragtime Band'), elect to be dramatic ('Send Me To The 'Lectric Chair'), or rollick in double-entendre ('Kitchen Man', 'Empty Bed Blues'). And, with Joe Smith's honeyed cornet underlining the pathos, she turns 'Young Woman's Blues' into a confession about the need for love in spite of frailty, the gladness which accepts mortality ('See that long, lonesome road/You know it's got to end'). Artistry like that is rare in any century. □

Books

Peter Ilich (see this page) and Robert Allen (see next page): the times ain't a-changed very much

MUSIC: 1

Life works

Andrew Clements

MUSICAL BIOGRAPHIES on quite the scale of Ernest Newman's *Life of Wagner* might no longer seem viable publishing propositions, yet multi-volume studies continue to appear. Budden's Verdi, Mitchell's Mahler, Perle's Berg have all become the definitive treatments of their subjects, while another two equally distinguished part-works still move slowly towards completion.

In **Tchaikovsky: The Years of Wandering 1878-1885** (Gollancz, £25) David Brown reaches one of the most intriguing portions of the composer's life, in which in the aftermath of his disastrous marriage to Antonina Milyukova he became rootless and profoundly disturbed, and which produced a series of works that, though invariably flawed, contain some of the most absorbing music of his output. The Second Piano Concerto, Piano Trio, *Manfred* Symphony and the opera *Mazepa* all have structural and thematic shortcomings, but they experiment with form and content in ways that the more perfectly conceived pieces never do.

Brown's biography has been remarkable for his ability to marry a comprehensively researched and presented life with detailed and perceptive musical analyses; the two elements proceed comfortably in parallel. He has had access to an edition of Tchaikovsky's letters suppressed in the Soviet Union and which enable him to chart the complex psychology far more fully than before. The biggest revelations, though, will arrive with the final volume; meanwhile his humane treatment of the composer's pathetically vulnerable relationships and rather sterner discussion of the musical imperfections are woven into a well modulated narrative.

Erik Tawaststjerna's **Sibelius, Volume 2 1904-1914** (Faber, £17.50), translated by Robert Layton, also combines life and works, but handles the life considerably more impressively than the works. Tawaststjerna presents a day-to-day chronicle of Sibelius' burgeoning career in as much detail as anyone is ever likely to want to read but throws little light upon the genesis of some extraordinary music.

On the works themselves he is frankly dull, almost perversely prosaic; you would never realise from Tawaststjerna that in the Fourth Symphony Sibelius began one of the most radical reshapings of symphonic form since Beethoven, or that the 'symphonic fantasy' *Pohjola's Daughter* is anything more than a literal example of programme music, trailing in the tawdry wake of Richard Strauss and Rimsky-Korsakov. Perhaps the reaction against Sibelius in the 20 years after his death has discouraged analysts from tackling his achievement systematically; Tawaststjerna's failure to deal with it only reinforces the need for a prompt and thorough investigation.

While a deluge of recordings threatens, the centenary of Liszt's death has so far not been noticed by publishers; only Ronald Taylor's **Franz Liszt: The Man and the Musician** (Granada, £15) seems a significant addition to the literature this year. I admired Taylor's earlier Schumann study greatly; he writes from the perspective of a specialist in German literature and it gives his writing a wider context than many a purely musical approach. His Liszt is less absorbing,

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partly perhaps because the subject is less intrinsically sympathetic and because the literary world is not so intimately woven into Liszt's creative thinking as it was in the case of Schumann. But compact and sensible books on the composer are not so numerous that one of this control and breadth can be easily set aside.

A new Liszt volume is one of the forthcoming titles promised in the Master Musician series; the latest to emerge is **Rossini** (Dent, £14.95) by Richard Osborne. It seems to me one of the most valuable additions to the series for some time; there has not been a study of Rossini and his music in English for almost 50 years and the realisation that he was the composer of much more than just the handful of operas in general circulation is gradually pervading the musical world. Osborne creates a highly sympathetic portrait, giving it plenty of finely detailed flesh; he is a vociferous champion of the cause of the neglected masterpieces, a careful chronicler of the textual complexities that surround much of the output.

Hard on the heels of the volume of collected writings which I reviewed here three months ago comes **Pierre Boulez: A Symposium** (Eulenburg Books, £12), edited by William Glock. It is a useful but uneven collection, reprinting Peter Heyworth's elegant biographical essay which appeared in the *New Yorker* in 1973 and including newly commissioned articles by Gerald Bennett on the early style, Charles Rosen on the piano works and Susan Bradshaw on almost everything else. These constitute the hard analytic core: Célestin Deliège's meditation on the relationship between Boulez and Mallarmé is nebulous stuff, while Glock's own memoir of Boulez at the BBC is interesting enough but covers ground already traversed by Heyworth.

Finally, two reference works of uncertain value. I was disappointed by Paul Griffiths' **Encyclopaedia of 20th-century Music** (Thames & Hudson, £10.50) not for what it was — a concise set of scrupulous entries on the major figures, movements and works in the music of this century — but for what it could have been: a really comprehensive guide to the composers of the present day, whose biographies and work lists are often so hard to pin down. **The New Harvard Dictionary of Music**, edited by Don Randel (Harvard, £19.95) seems reasonably redundant and, anyway, I find it hard to take seriously a musical dictionary whose entry on the USA manages to omit all mention of Elliott Carter. □

Litter bug

Mark Wyatt

Summer sunshine fills me with arrogance.
It's all in my gait, the head tilted back like
quality wine
A second after the taste.

I visit the park everyday in fine weather,
Find a green space thoughtfully cleared of all
shade,
Even condensed into my underarm book.
Do you know I invented paper?

I pull out a sheet and start my letter 'Dear'
Slightly self-consciously as if aware
Of sixteenth century dandies hunting on this
spot.
'My hart bleeds'.

Beyond the girls basting in birthday suits
I can see a boy in a 'CHICAGO BEARS'
sweat-shirt
Being baited by a dog.

MUSIC: 2

Temporary, like Achilles

Jon Savage

No Direction Home: The Life and Music of Bob Dylan
ROBERT SHELTON *NEL* £14.95

IN SEPTEMBER 1961, Robert Shelton wrote the first major review of the then unknown Bob Dylan; published in the *New York Times*, it was a contributory factor in the young singer's rise to fame. As often happens in these cases, the journalist became close to the performer and Shelton capitalised on the friendship to prepare an authorised biography — or as authorised an account as he would ever get — of Bob Dylan at the height of his fame in 1966. For some reason, never satisfactorily explained, the book hasn't come out until 20 years later.

Perhaps Shelton got bogged down in the material. At 500 densely packed pages, *No Direction Home* parallels Dylan at his most prolix. No performer has been so mythologised as Bob Dylan. Despite the fact that, in music industry terms, his record sales are low, people will insist on: going through his garbage; bootlegging every last fragment of song or conversation; talking repeatedly about him in terms of Villon, Rimbaud and Yeats. Even for a performer who has so assiduously cultivated myth this has been a bit much. Unfortunately, it's a trap that Shelton falls right into.

Those looking for welcome relief from the 'Bob Dylan as seer' syndrome will find none here. Shelton's insistence on explaining *every*thing — often in lit-crit terms — obscures his book's many strong points. His roots in the New York folk scene give his account of Dylan's rise through the in-fighting of this enclosed world a definitive authority; he's also excellent on the musical tensions that went on within the avid student of Woody Guthrie who'd also seen Buddy Holly in January 1959, three days before Holly's death. Shelton has also done his legwork — an undertaking all too rare in pop books. His descriptions of Dylan's family background, his adolescence in Hibbing, Minnesota, and brief university career are without peer. In many respects, *No Direction Home* supersedes all previous books on Dylan. What it lacks is focus.

This might be suggested by the English perspective. Despite two previous visits in 1962 and 1964 — when he gave a well received concert — Dylan effectively arrived here in March 1965 as a fully fledged superstar. The respected folk singer suddenly had pop hits: this success in England snowballed first in America and then around the world. The great fascination of Pennebaker's film *Don't Look Back* is that it captures Dylan at this very point, the fusing moment when a performer gains cultural power beyond his wildest dreams. Dylan's achievement — for which he is justly celebrated — was to seize the possibilities of that power.

For two vertiginous years, in 1965 and 1966, Dylan brought the depth of folk music, with its archetypes, into the electric, instantaneous medium of pop; in doing so, he changed pop culture for ever. It is on this period that his massive reputation rests. And the book's highspot is not its accumulation of detail, but a long, slurred interview conducted with Dylan at the eye of his storm, in March 1966, on a plane high above mid America. Dylan is stoned, allusive and highly defensive: 'People want to tear me apart,' he says at one point. Shelton gives a memorable picture of a man trying desperately to hold on to the last shreds of identity under the withering light of fame. 'Someone else wrote that,' he snaps when quizzed about a song. 'God, I'm glad I'm not me.'

This interview gives the clue to the book's real subject, obscured under the trappings. Dylan is interesting not as a seer or as a poet — those particular lit-crit arguments are obsolete — but as a pop star dealing with the killing pressures of common fame and the limitations of a medium which he helped to define. Dylan was ever Pop: adept at self-recreation until he got trapped, in the book's most telling comment, 'in the vortex of being "the messiah"'. Dylan is now stuck in myth like a fly in amber. The rest of his career has been measured, both by himself and others, against that powerful, timeless music he made between 1964 and 1968. The over-respectful approach of this book further shores up that myth which has become Dylan's millstone. □

SHORT STORIES

But the kitchen sink

Michelene Wandor

Passing Through
DON BLOCH *Heinemann* £10.95
A Long Weekend with Marcel Proust
RONALD FRAME *Bodley Head* £9.95
The Far Side of the River
YAACOV ZIPPER *Mosaic Press* dist. *John Calder* £3.95
The Casualty
HEINRICH BÖLL *Chatto* £9.95
Wayward Girls and Wicked Women
ed. ANGELA CARTER *Virago* £9.95 & £4.50

THE TERM 'SHORT STORY' encompasses a multitude of formal approaches; after reading through this varied batch, I conclude that the only categorical thing one can say about the category is that it applies to any piece of fiction which a publisher cannot justify publishing on its own and calling a 'novel'. Don Bloch's book is a case in

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point. If Pat Barker's first collection of stories *Union Street* could be sold as a novel, then how much more suitable is the term for **Passing Through**. It consists of three episodes in the lives of Eric and Koerl Jan, colleagues, friends and lovers (most delicately placed clues to their homosexuality). The two men, anthropologists involved in aid projects to the Third World, live for periods in Kenya, Indonesia and Yemen. The novellas tread tricky ground, exploring colonial aid and relations in post-colonial countries. The accounts, narrated by Eric, have the tone of carefully penned letters to a close friend, giving the same honesty to descriptions of exotic landscapes and the vagaries of master-servant relations which uncannily reproduce all the emotions of inter-familial misunderstandings and feuds.

Ronald Frame's narrative tone (even in the first-person stories) is altogether cooler and more distant. The prose fictions in **A Long Weekend with Marcel Proust** aim straight for the intellect; the narrators spell out their concern about the relationship between life and art — playing variations on the theme. In the title story, the perfection of art, which the husband strives for, provokes the wife to strike out for independence in life. In 'Prelude and Fugue' (rightly headlined as a novel) Frame goes beyond the simplicities of the art/life divide to explore the borderlines of mental dislocation as the life of a young woman during the war shifts disconcertingly between reality and the supernatural. If his point is that life is really lived in the unconscious, then this tale bears it out; typographical differences tease the relationship between different pasts and the present, although some of the double-column setting seems like mere trickery. Frame is a writer who relies on care, logic and distance, creating unsettling patterns with aplomb.

His cool tone is many miles and cultures away from Yaacov Zipper's stories. Born in Poland in 1900, Zipper emigrated to Canada aged 26, where he died in 1983. His literary output was written in Yiddish and Hebrew — an unusual thing in Canada, where ethnicity is more beleaguered than assimilated. Zipper shares with Bashevis Singer a perception of the margins of sanity in Jewish experience. Most of the stories in **The Far Side of the River** are set in Poland, in the *shtetls*, the small towns where Jews were subject to pogroms and the sometimes dubious benefits of Soviet liberation. Here the crucifix does not help the rabbi; only the prayers, the songs and stories keep a persecuted people on this side of the river of sanity.

Heinrich Böll's title story in **The Casualty** is about a young soldier overjoyed to have a shrapnel-produced hole in his back, since this means he is relieved of the horrors of the trench. As he travels back to the relative safety of Rumania, a motley collection of reluctant fighters joins him. The reluctance and misery of the ordinary soldier is the uniting theme of the collection; young men who do not care what the causes are and find passing relief in silent sexual encounters. It could, of course, be any war — except for an ugly, bitter tale in which a hook-nosed Russian is shot with Jews by the Nazis. The brutally ironic end to this story is salutary; and the act of deranged self-destruction in 'The Cage' seals the virtual impossibility of approaching the atrocities of World War Two with anything other than horror.

Finally, a book to lift the spirits: **Wayward Girls and Wicked Women**. Angela Carter has chosen 18 stories written by women, from Colette to Grace Paley, during the past century. The female protagonists are central to all the stories, the most mischievous of them being the ones where the women invoke magic or the fear of witchcraft to give them strength in otherwise ordinary lives. Note, however, that Christina Stead, who is flagged on the blurb, does not appear in the book. What sleight of hand is at work here? □

Michelene Wandor's collection of stories Guests in the Body *was published earlier this year by Virago.*

ESSAYS

Her own thing

Sara Maitland

The Madwoman's Underclothes
GERMAINE GREER *Picador* £9.95

WHEN I WAS an undergraduate I heard Germaine Greer speak: she was indeed weird and wonderful and, as it turned out, the evening transformed my life. A short while later I bought a copy of *The Female Eunuch* and pored over it — alone and with others — and thus she was the instrument, if the image may be so pressed, of my birthing into feminism. I owe her a debt of gratitude which I suspect is shared by many women, even though I am sure that if I read the book again I would be appalled by its contents and amazed at the impact that it had on me.

I relate all this anecdotal stuff only because it explains how I come to approach *The Madwoman's Underclothes* with the sort of tolerance that is normally reserved for beloved but slightly senile old ladies. I truly want to do the best I can for her, as I attempt to make something coherent out of this collection of her 'essays and occasional writings, 1968-1985'. Because, dear God, she really is *bonkers*. What we see in the progression through these 50 or so pieces of, predominantly, journalistic writing is libertarian individualism running amok and ending up not in anarchic chaos, as our elders and betters once feared, but in a manic individualism which is frequently charming, occasionally brilliant and fundamentally arrogant and patronising. Right from the beginning in the *Oz* pieces of the late 1960s she conflated 'doing your own thing' with 'political revolution'. 'To kill a man is simply murder: it is revolution to turn him on.' (Go tell that to the ANC or, indeed, any serious revolutionary, even a feminist one.)

Perhaps it is not really fair to hold such youthful expressions against anyone but, first, Greer has chosen to reissue these burblings and, second, in them lie the seeds of her improbable present conviction: that she is the only person in the world who has got it right. These papers cover an enormous diversity of subjects, from vaginal deodorants to the distribution of aid in Ethiopia, with underclothes, premenstrual syndrome, cosmetic surgery and transexualism thrown in, and in none of these articles does anyone, by name or by ideology, come in for any praise (except possibly the Cuban women's organisation who, they'll be glad to hear, are doing more or less okay). Well, not no one — there is one person who knows where it's at and will be pleased to correct you, and that is Dr Greer herself. Most recently she has taken up the causes of various victim groups, as she sees them, in the Third World. It is not her sincerity that is in doubt here; it is her conviction that no one else in the whole of the West is sincere. And interestingly she ends up speaking of them exactly as Victorian men spoke of women: they are purer, nobler in their suffering and poverty than we can ever be; they are 'closer to nature' and able to teach us moral truths so long as we do not contaminate them with our evil materialism; they are too innocent to know what they really need, but luckily they have Greer to tell them.

Despite my delight in her stunt acts, my old debt and my agreement with so many things she says,

THE P.E.N. ANTHOLOGIES

The English Centre of P.E.N., in partnership with Quartet, will be publishing a poetry anthology, P.E.N. NEW POETRY II, which will be edited by Elaine Feinstein and appear in Spring 1988. The aim, as always with P.E.N. anthologies, is to encourage new writers, so that approximately one-third of the volume will be devoted to well-known writers and two-thirds to the work of the new or the less well-known.

Previously unpublished poems (not more than three per person) written in English by living writers of British nationality (or those long resident here) should be sent to The Editor, P.E.N. NEW POETRY II, The English Centre of P.E.N., 7 Dilke Street, London SW3 4JE, by January 31st, 1987.

Poems must be typewritten, have the writer's name and address on the title page, and should not exceed sixty lines. A biography of not more than six lines should accompany all entries. No acknowledgements will be sent and poems will not be returned. *No correspondence will be entered into.*

We hope to publish another short story anthology in Spring 1989, but will not require contributions until January 1988.

QUARTET BOOKS

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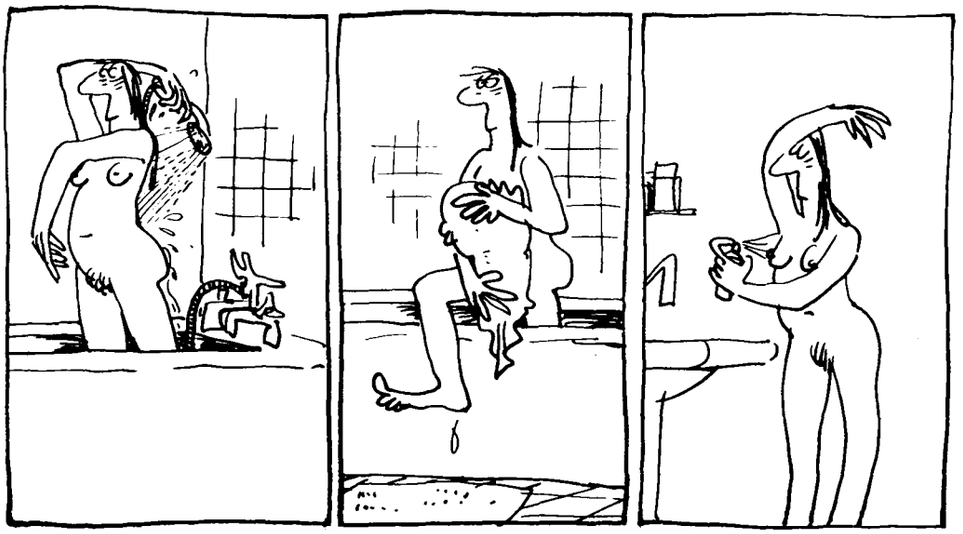
none of this is enough. Feminism was born out of libertarianism and has had to struggle to grow out of it, to replace manic individualism with solidarity and discipline itself with political analysis. Of course we need that crazy flamboyance too, but Greer does not write like someone who is auditioning for the role of Court Jester, more like someone applying for the job of God. Frankly, despite the mess we are in — which she so often notes perceptively — this career opportunity is not currently being advertised. □



'Typical bloody woman. Remember how hooked we all became on Bretécher's weekly cartoons in the *Statesman*? Then what did she do? Just gave it all up on the whim of having a baby. No *wonder* there aren't any Great Women Artists.' 'Actually, Bretécher hasn't stopped working; some of the strips in STILL MORE FRUSTRATION (Methuen, £4.50) were evidently drawn this year . . .' 'Great! Just great! Four million unemployed and she doesn't think twice about snatching work from the hands of some poor male breadwinner.' For further reports from the sex war (not to mention the age war), fans of the French cartoonist Claire Bretécher should rush for her latest collection. Some of the jokes are dragged too thinly over her usual dozen-plus frames, but no one watches and listens to Yuppies with so much delighted, predatory awareness — and nobody draws the female body (slumped in premenstrual *Weltschmerz*; furiously inspected for cellulite) with such unkind understanding. (Harriett Gilbert)

PAPERBACKS

Endgames

Paul Hallam

TRASH COGNOSCENTI acquired imported copies of Kenneth Anger's **Hollywood Babylon** (Arrow, £7.95) long ago. Now available in large format, the photos look more gruesome than ever, tacky lives and deaths are writ larger. Some of the novelty has worn off since the book's appearance in the early Sixties. Stars sell their own stories now, come through coke, booze and Betty Ford clinics born again and preaching. Bad times were simpler then, you jumped to your death from the Hollywood sign. It's a wicked and affectionate book, once an eye-opener, particularly on the sex lives of women. It added to the stars' glamour: they made more spectacular messes of their lives than mere mortals. **Hollywood Babylon II** (Arrow, £7.95) is more of the same, leading to Hollywood Armageddon. Reagan's screen appearances, Anger notes, include *The Killers*, *Dark Victory* and *Accidents Will Happen*.

T. H. White relishes gossip of an earlier time in **The Age of Scandal** (Oxford, £4.95). 'Well, we have lived to see the end of civilisation in England,' he wrote in 1950. To escape the likes of Shinwell and Bevan he looks to Walpole and the last half of the 18th century. Then men displayed 'bottom' (guts), though manly tears were quite acceptable. There is also an essay on ear fetishism of the time. Monarchs might be mad, sad and tired, but they were cultured. In all this outrageous Tory nostalgia the most moving quote is from a yeoman: '. . . the most shocking thing was to hear the cris of the wooned french as we rid over when we prsud them, but we could not help it . . . nothing is so hard as the kiling of men.' The most striking image, the whitewashed walls of the Bank of England after the Gordon Riots, the blood rinsed away.

I cried when I saw Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart* and laughed reading his 1980 satire on gay lifestyles, **Faggots** (Methuen, £3.95). Yet both are maddening. Pleas for monogamy and/or chastity by misanthropic moralising. Ideal homosexuals, he implies, should drink and eat moderately, work out regularly, avoid sex, wear smart clothes and above all be cultured. It is enough, but for Aids, to drive people back to the variegated Sodom he deplores. It starts wittily and ends with graphic and stomach churning S/M sex. Some of the polite audience for *The Normal Heart* may be shocked.

According to the introduction 'Many hands were probably at work' in the creation of **Teleny** (GMP, £4.95. The original 1893 edition was five guineas!). Pass the porn parcel. When the parcel stopped the recipient added a chapter. Oscar Wilde apparently played. More celebratory than *Faggots*, with orgies 'worthy of Babylon or Sodom' *and* a central and impassioned gay love story, the intention was to set the readers' hands to work. It is a bizarre book, alternating porn with florid purple passages, a hymn to sodomy with an angry attack on notions of the 'natural'. There's a vivid account of outdoor city cruising, a satire on medical and social attitudes to homosexuality and much more. The love story ends sadly, alas, a man forced to watch his mother ride his young male lover. *Teleny* tends to be relegated to footnotes in biographies of Wilde.

'If bloodshed is absolutely necessary in making history, I would rather someone else did the history-making,' writes Michel del Castillo in the preface to his **The Disinherited** (trans. Humphrey Hare, Serpent's Tail, £4.95). In this novel of the Spanish Civil War he explores the politics of each character, reasons for anger, motives for revenge, sometimes their resignation. One, finally broken, lays down on a railway line, too tired to escape. 'She did not understand,' another remarks, 'it's not easy to live, not easy at all.' Fascist atrocities, Communist callousness and massive self-righteousness on both sides. In the end del Castillo is for those who 'quietly wiped away the tears of the wounded to write the history of God.' No simple humanism or religion, no easy consolation. It's an agonised book, against injustice, understanding anger but never on the side of violence.

Vincent Crapanzano, in **Waiting: The Whites of South Africa** (Paladin, £4.95) suggests that many white South Africans talk of violence past and potential to avoid action in the present. Few of those interviewed in a small village north of Cape Town refer to the Blacks, who scarcely exist for

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them. The English, the Jewish and the Afrikaners more frequently attack each other, open old wounds and argue interminably about religion. It is profoundly depressing. Unable to see beyond their own grievances and history, they regard apartheid simply as natural — 'birds of a feather flock together'. Mostly, when they do look to the future, it's in visions of Apocalypse or Armageddon, almost a desire for it, a relief from waiting.

'White is, in effect, a color very easily soiled,' Duras writes in her third novel, **The Sea Wall** (Faber, £4.95). 'Ma' struggles to survive in her near worthless coastal land concession in French Indo-China. A reminder that settlers were often the victims of their own imperialist governments and corrupt colonial bureaucracies. Her daughter refuses to prostitute herself for the diamonds of a plantation heir. Ma increasingly identifies with the starving native population. Daughter and son lead a deep, near incestuous life, their fantasies bound up with the dark of the cinema. It's an unsentimental meditation on resilience and rebellion.

One of the keepers interviewed by Tony Parker in **Lighthouse** (Eland, £4.95) speaks of the need to 'to be part of something I'd no qualms about doing', to be away from destruction. An interest in 'ordinary human beings rubbing along', men setting up home together for two-month stretches. Some of the men and their wives adjust to the shifts and absences from home, even flourish. Some crack. 'On your own looking out a lighthouse window . . . it's a funny sort of existence.' The sea is respected, moods taken from it. Not struggling. A book that somehow goes much deeper than its ostensible subject and a long way from Babylon. □

Paul Hallam is a freelance writer, currently working on two film scripts.

JUSTICE

A broad frame

Eamonn McArdle

Trial and Error
ROBERT KEE *Hamish Hamilton* £10.95
Error of Judgement
CHRIS MULLIN *Chatto* £10.95

SOLICITOR Alastair Logan, addressing a recent public meeting on the cases of the Guildford Four and the Maguire Seven, claimed that there was overwhelming evidence to prove these people innocent of all the charges on which they were convicted. However, 'formidable obstacles' faced the attempt to have their cases reconsidered and the verdicts overturned. There was, he said, 'a conspiracy to pervert the course of justice reaching to the highest levels of the British legal system'.

Robert Kee, typically, is more cautious, but he is just as convinced as Logan — to whom he dedicates **Trial and Error** — of the innocence of those convicted; and, like Logan, he has rendered them a signal service. The Guildford Four, three men from Belfast, Paul Hill, Gerard Conlon, Patrick Armstrong, and Armstrong's cockney lover Carole Richardson, were convicted of murder for the Guildford pub bombings, which killed five people in 1974. Hill and Conlon were additionally convicted of murder for the subsequent Woolwich pub bombing, which killed two. They were convicted solely on the basis of confessions made in police custody. All four retracted their confessions in court, claiming that they had been forced to confess after violence was used against them by police and further violence threatened should they refuse to cooperate.

An IRA unit caught in 1975 during the Balcombe Street siege claimed responsibility for the Guildford and Woolwich bombings, among others. At their trial, one of them repeated the claim that four innocent people had been sentenced for these bombings and that the DPP had failed to lift a finger to help them, despite the defendants' admissions. It also emerged at the trial that a senior government forensic expert, acting on instructions from the Bomb Squad and the DPP, had withheld forensic evidence from the defence at the trial of the Guildford Four that could have proved crucial to its case.

Notwithstanding all this, the appeal of the four was dismissed. They are still in prison with no prospect of parole, serving life sentences for crimes they insist they did not commit.

Anne Maguire, an aunt of Gerard Conlon's, was initially implicated in the bombings — along with several others against whom no charge was ever brought — by Paul Hill's 'confession'. The charge was later dropped. But in a raid on her home the Bomb Squad arrested her, along with her husband, their family and anyone else who happened to be around the house at the time. Giuseppe Conlon, Gerard's father, who had travelled across from Belfast the same day on hearing of his son's arrest, was one of those lifted in the swoop. The hands of all seven people were tested for traces of explosives; the tests proved positive. Yet, despite a search of the house and the entire neighbourhood, no trace of the nitroglycerine with which the tests purported to show that the seven had been in contact was ever found. Nor was any of the seven ever charged in connection with any actual explosion.

Nevertheless, they were found guilty of being in possession of explosives for unlawful purposes and sentenced to heavy terms of imprisonment. Leave to appeal was later refused. Giuseppe Conlon died in prison protesting his innocence. Anne Maguire was released from prison in 1985, the last of the seven to complete her sentence.

Kee bases his arguments for a revision of both trial verdicts on two main considerations. He reveals crying inconsistencies and major absurdities in the prosecution case at both trials, and judicial summing up in many instances seriously prejudicial to the interests of the defendants and appellants. Second he offers some general arguments on the individuals concerned, setting out from their repeated and unvarying protestations of innocence. His sketches of character and milieu are often telling though his olympian tone can be irritating. Evoking the squatting scene in north-west London in the early Seventies he writes that, through it, 'there ran a thread of aspiration to happiness occasionally fulfilled'.

Kee repeatedly draws back from following through the logic of his defence of those convicted. Their innocence, however, raises serious questions about p honesty, about the possibility that the Bom l planted evidence of explosive traces c ures, about the incidence of brutal i ion procedures in Surrey police custo and about judicial complacence or even complicity. The reader will forg Kee his hesitations on account of his me ured but passionate advocacy of the case of 11 innocents abroad, the hapless victims of extremely ruthless and sinister people.

Since the publication of Kee's book, and following extensive publi representations to the Home Office, the Home S cretary has announced that he will officially re nsider the case of the Maguires. (No mention was made of the Guildford Four although Kee insists that the two cases are 'inextricably linked'.) Their dossier joins that of the Birmingham Six which has been sitting on his desk since Chris Mullin's report on the matter for Granada TV's *World in Action* over a year ago. In **Error of Judgement** Mullin furnishes the extraordinary, and frequently sickening, details of the framing of six Irishmen for the Birmingham pub bombings. For his television report Mullin effectively pulled the two legs from under the prosecution argument: the forensic evidence; the confessions. Both were thoroughly discredited. For his book he gives the *coup de grâce* to the prosecution case: the details of interviews he conducted with the IRA men actually responsible for the Birmingham bombs.

These two books belong together. □

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Non-nuclear fallacies

Mervyn Jones. London NW1

Since the disaster of 1983, a Labour consensus has developed around the 'non-nuclear defence policy'. The doctrine of strong conventional forces, it's believed, would (a) equip Britain to confront the Soviet Union effectively and (b) enable Labour to rebut Tory charges of leaving Britain defenceless and thus win an election. As Peter Kellner puts it (*NS* 24 Oct.): 'More money for conventional defence is a sensible policy.' But is it?

Like other sensible people, I don't believe that the Russians are thirsting to attack across the Elbe. I do believe that, if involved in war for any reason or by any mischance, they would fight to win. If the British Army were doing rather well on the Hamburg front, the obvious answer would be to drop a one-megaton bomb on its HQ and supply bases. The same goes for the bases, in the home country, of the Navy and RAF. Moreover, unless Neil Kinnock had persuaded the US to go non-nuclear too (an unlikely achievement), Soviet commanders would see no reason to make distinctions among their NATO opponents.

The sensible man or woman can see that the nuclear bomb is the dominant weapon of modern war, and is likely to conclude that to contemplate fighting without it is today's equivalent of meeting gunpowder with bows and arrows. This brings us to the electoral considerations. 'Sending our lads naked to the battlefield' could be a lethal accusation; it sounds worse than refusing to send them anywhere. Military chiefs (serving or lately retired) will need little encouragement, their sympathies being Tory anyway, to sound off with solemn warnings. In papers like the *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraph*, they've started already.

The truth is that conventional forces capable of matching Soviet strength would require not just 'more money', but vastly more money. Sophisticated modern weapons, though non-nuclear, are very expensive. More divisions under arms, at current pay levels, would be very expensive too. Indeed, relative cheapness was one reason for adopting the nuclear option in the first place.

In the *NS* 17 Oct., Kellner analysed opinion-poll results and found that those favouring unilateral nuclear disarmament averaged 30-35 per cent. Curiously, in the old naive days of the Aldermaston marches, when the slogan was: 'The only defence is peace' (and when unilateralism wasn't, except briefly, Labour policy), the figure was also around 30-35 per cent. The non-nuclear defence policy, patiently expounded by Kinnock and Healey since 1983, doesn't seem to have helped much. And now, there's not much more time.

Who, then, is being sensible? In 1960, CND published a pamphlet (*Let Britain Lead*, 6d) addressed to Labour supporters, signed by Fenner Brockway, Michael Foot, Judith Hart, Kingsley Martin and Ian Mikardo among others. It says: 'The facts of life and death in the nuclear age may be clear to more people than we imagine, especially to those who have grown up since Hiroshima . . . In the long run, the British people will respect the party that tells them the truth.' I believed that in 1960 (as a matter of fact, I drafted the pamphlet) and I believe it now.

Working world

David Boulton, Head of News & Current Affairs, Granada TV

Norman Willis (*NS* 14 Nov.) is a trifle hard on Channel 4. He sees its decision to drop *Union World* after March next year 'as part of a pattern of retreat . . . from the high ground of public service broadcasting'. I have more faith in C4 than that — even though it's our own Granada programme they are dropping.

The *Union World* story may be of some interest to your readers. Gus Macdonald invented it, and I first put it on the air in 1981 as a North-West regional programme with Gus and Anna Ford presenting. When Jeremy Isaacs committed his new channel to 'give trade unions and trade union affairs more thorough and better informed coverage . . . in order to ensure that the attitudes and opinions of trade unionists are fairly represented in the spectrum of British political opinion', we offered him *Union World* and he accepted it as part of his innovative programming.

After four years, however, Granada thought another dash of innovation was due. Wasn't it time, we said, for a broader programme which wasn't content with preaching to the converted but set out to expand its audience? Good idea, said C4: but not necessarily from Granada!

We are not complaining at that. If Channel 4 can find a stronger, more professional and more committed team than *Union World* they should snap it up. What is vitally important is that the broader programme which replaces *Union World* next year is *more*, not less, committed to Isaac's 1981 brief: gives *more and better* coverage of trade unionists' attitudes and opinions. A 'broader' programme which simply diminished such coverage in order to make space for general workplace issues would be not an innovation but a retrogression.

The *Union World* team, drawing on five years specialist experience of winning the confidence of trade unionists while firmly adhering to the canons of 'due impartiality', will be proposing to Channel 4 a programme which does all *Union World* has been doing, and more. Its focus will be on the future rather than the past, on the problems of post-industrial as well as industrial society, and on European and global aspects of organised labour (for which it will make effective use of satellite technology). It will concentrate on the workforce but will not exclude management, nor will it pretend that there is a single 'community of interest' among workers — an idea exploded by printworkers and electricians. It will probably drop the word 'Union' from its title, but it will ensure that, in Jeremy Isaacs's words, 'trade unionists are fairly represented in the spectrum of political opinion'; and in Norman Willis's words, it will 'deal consistently and in depth with the concerns and achievements of the trade union movement'.

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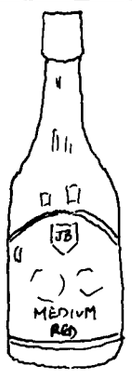

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We have every reason to believe that Channel 4 will welcome such a programme and give it the place it deserves in its schedules. But that's up to them. What I can promise Norman Willis is that Granada's commitment to properly-resourced, unbiased, independent and often critical coverage of the world of working people and their voluntary associations will continue undimmed on one channel or the other.

Brent's bad behaviour

Leslie Moody, London SE3

With the greatest respect to Diane Abbott (*NS* letters 14 Nov.), it is *she* who is missing the point. What outraged so many of us in the Labour Party and trade union movement over the McGoldrick affair was the spectacle of a Labour-controlled authority behaving towards one of its employees like the worst kind of oppressive and authoritarian employer. When Brent Labour Group decided to set aside the school governors' unanimous findings and to order a retrial it was like giving the prosecution the right to refer a magistrates' court acquittal to the Crown Court. If Miss Abbott doesn't yet comprehend this she must be asked to reflect that persecution in employment doesn't suddenly become respectable because it is practised by the hard left or by black against white. The Tories are doing their damndest to whittle away such employment protection as workers enjoy under current legislation. We don't take kindly to their getting encouragement, however unintended, from prospective Labour parliamentary candidates.

Aids and Lyndon LaRouche

Tim Grana, London WC2

I am disappointed by the shallowness of Patrick Forbes's interview of Lyndon LaRouche (*NS* 7 Nov.). Why, in a feature headlined AIDS, should space be given to an extremist seeking to exploit a sensationalist issue for political gain? It is not enough to preface the interview with the disclaimer that 'medical assertions' by LaRouche are not 'necessarily correct': he has absolutely no qualifications for making *any* medical assertions and does not deserve the generous opportunity the *NS* gave him for spouting his nonsense about a grave issue already abounding in misinformation.

And why put to him such tame questions about his 'reported belief' in the role of the Royal family in some international drug cabal — a question he is allowed to brush aside as 'taken out of context' — instead of quoting from his many published fantasies on this and other topics? Does he still hold that Walter F. Mondale is 'an agent of influence of the Soviet Secret Intelligence Services' (1984 LaRouche campaign broadcast)? And should he not have been closely questioned about the public pronouncements of LaRouche candidate Janice Hart, who claims to adopt 'the tradition of Joan of Arc . . . an Angel Warrior' in order to do battle with Henry Kissinger's 'Homintern' (the 'Homosexual International') corrupting American youth with drugs and 'witch-cults'?

Given their mass cancellations of European holidays this summer, I would not hold up my fellow Californians as paragons of courage, but despite their very understandable terror of Aids they were not panicked into voting in LaRouche's draconian Proposition 64. That must surely be due to the wide coverage of the range of LaRouche's bizarre delusions, not the soft kind of ill-prepared interview by the *NS* that — unintentionally — grants LaRouche a legitimacy to which he is not entitled.

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WHY LABOUR? Political Education Day School for Labour Activists, Peartree Club, Peartree Lane, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Refreshments available. Workshops on Economic Policy, Poverty, Foreign Policy, Ireland and Civil Liberties. Speakers include: Chris Pond of the Low Pay Unit. Details: Welwyn Garden 334530. Organised by Welwyn Hatfield CLP.

MON 24 NOV

BENEATH THE WHITE COAT. A seminar series on Science & Politics in the 1980s organised by the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science. The Marquis of Granby, Chandos Place, WC2. This week: Tony Webb Food Irradiation.

ISAAC DEUTSCHER MEMORIAL LECTURE. Robert Brenner the winner of the 1985 Isaac Deutscher Prize, will give a lecture 'The Autonomy of The State?', John Saville in the Chair, 7.30 p.m. London School of Economics, New Theatre, Houghton St, London WC2.

ISLINGTON & HORNSEY HEALTH EMERGENCY. Annual General Meeting at 7.30 p.m. Highbury New Park Day Centre, 19 Highbury New Park. Speakers: Councillor Candy Atherton (Chair — Islington Women's Committee), Brid Greally (Islington Women & Mental Health), Chris Goody (Secretary — Islington Joint Shop Stewards Committee). Disabled Access. Refreshments available. Further details ring Rosie Cooper or Roger Harris 01-272 1772.

TUES 25 NOV

PUBLIC MEETING

POLICE OUT OF OUR SCHOOLS!

County Hall, London SE1. 7 p.m.

Speakers invited: **Tony Bunyan** (Ex-GLC Police Unit), **Gee Bernard** (Chair of ILEA's Special Education Sub-Comm.), **Linda Bellos** (Leader of Lambeth Council), **Tony Shepherd** (Hackney Police Committee), and an ILTA speaker.

WED 26 NOV

WORK, INCOME & SOCIETY — lecture by Rt Hon. John Smith MP, Shadow Industry Secretary. 1.05 p.m. St James's Church, 197 Piccadilly W1. 01-734 4511.

THURS 27 NOV

CHURCH ACTION ON NAMIBIA. Rally for Namibia at Bloomsbury Baptist Church, Shaftesbury Avenue, 7.30 p.m. Speakers from Council of Churches of Namibia and SWAPO.

INAUGURAL MEETING of Hatfield Anti-Apartheid. Oxlease Methodist Church Hall, Oxlease Drive, Hatfield, Herts. 7.30 p.m. Speakers from AA, video on conditions in South Africa. Details: Hatfield 64565.

SAT 29 NOV

NEW FOOD POLITICS CONFERENCE

Topics include *women and food, ethnic minorities, additives, irradiation, politics of heart disease, health and safety in food industry.* Workshops, speakers, video, bookstall, good food. **10-6 p.m. Red Rose Club, 129 Seven Sisters Rd, N7.**

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BACKCHAT

FIRST PERSON

Would you buy a used book . . .?

driffield

THE POPULAR IMAGE of the antiquarian bookdealer is of an elderly, erudite, slightly eccentric gentleman, stumbling his way around his dust-laden shop, ever anxious to satisfy the desires of the infrequent customers who pass through his portals. As so often in life, the truth is the exact opposite.

Most bookdealers are young, determined and only concerned with making a quick fortune. The only books they ever read are accounts, or other dealers' catalogues. Those that are not so financially orientated tend to be freaks or failures. I know, I am one.

In the last year or so, one bookdealer has been arrested for murder, one has been found guilty of a series of 'flashing' offences going back over five years (he used the Antiquarian Bookdealers Association fairs as a cover), one has just been released from prison for removing £250,000 worth of prints from Welsh public libraries, another has just finished his sentence for fraud against a major West End dealer, one has changed sex, five have served prison sentences for drugs offences and one has featured as the anti-hero of a William Golding novel . . .

One enterprising dealer financed the purchase of a collection of antiquarian books in Argentina (he'd never heard of embargoes), sent out a representative who smuggled them into Uruguay and then had them exported to Eire and then on to England where he made £55,000 profit. Another recently spotted a collection of rare letters in an Isle of Wight auction. He sent the porter out to buy a bottle of whisky and spent two days sitting on the tea-chest consuming as much as alcohol as he could manage, thus ensuring that nobody else viewed the lot! It was knocked down to him for £2,000. He has now gone into partnership with a major West End firm and they are asking one university a quarter of a million for the letters.

There are one thousand antiquarian bookshops in Great Britain.

I haven't met such an interesting group of people since I got out of Broadmoor.

* * * * *

Friday: A friend telephones and says he has a copy of the first edition of Katherine Mansfield's first book, which he delicately reminds me I have publicly valued at £1,000+ (this was for a mint copy in a dustwrapper). He offers it to me for £300. I try to sound as unenthusiastic as possible without actually saying no, and tell him I will ring him back.

Saturday: I spend most of the day trying to get hold of a potential customer on the phone. Late evening she answers and instantly says she would love to come to dinner. I ignore her and tell her about the Mansfield book which I claim I have seen in a catalogue at £500. She says it sounds a bit expensive and does it have a dustwrapper? Could I reduce the price a little and could I get it on sale or return? I ignore all this idle chat — clearly she desperately wants the thing.

I ring back my friend and ask him about the dustwrapper, he says it's never been seen in a d/w, I tell him one was listed in *Book Auction Records* with a d/w and signed (this is a lie, but I know he doesn't have a copy of the *Records*). He says it has never appeared anywhere, with such confidence that I almost believe him. I wonder what can be wrong and ask him the name of the book again. *In a German Pension*. It turns out I've quoted the wrong book to my customer. I ring her back and explain the new and improved situation: 'That's the rarest Katherine Mansfield there is!' she blurts out, unwisely, and then asks about the d/w and says the price is still too high. I arrange to meet her for dinner on Monday.

Sunday: I go to the bookfair, examine my friend's Mansfield book and am genuinely unimpressed. I poo-poo it as much as possible, but reluctantly agree to buy it for £250, after he has shown it cataloguing at £750 in worse condition. A small problem then ensues — I have no money. I offer him a postdated cheque for £160 and am very cheered when he lends me £35 in cash. I depart promising the rest of the money asap.

Monday: Her ladyship arrives at the restaurant and asks me to show her the book. I refuse at first; it is never a good policy to look too keen to sell. She begins to sulk, I mentally start counting the fivers, then relent and pass it over. She then complains about the price. I tell her the only way I could secure the book was to buy it outright for cash and if she doesn't want it I can sell it elsewhere for £750. We eat.

At the sweet, she longingly looks at me: 'Can't you reduce it, just for me?' I look deeply into her contact lenses: 'No.' She then says I will have to come over to her place on Sunday and I will have to part-exchange some letters she has from Romain Gary. I tell her I'll be in Wales on Sunday. She then gives me the bad news: she has to have the book, but she can only write a postdated cheque for six weeks hence. I am relieved it is so soon but try to look as glum as possible and wonder how I can stave off the creep who charged me £250 for it. How these people can go around buying books with no money I'll never know.

Tuesday: The rip-off artist comes banging on my door demanding his £125, I tell him I have no money. He says a cheque will do. I say I have no pen. He produces one. I then can't find my cheque book, but, whilst pulling out all my bits of paper, another cheque floats out, for £140. He gives me £15 cash, takes the cheque but fails to notice that it is dated three weeks hence: at least I can eat today. We go off for a meal, and he reveals he got the Katherine Mansfield from one of my arch enemies. I splutter in shock. 'Don't worry,' he says, 'I only gave him £50 for it.' This cheers me up considerably until he informs me that the arch enemy had himself bought it at a charity book sale for 50p. I don't mind people making a profit, but £49.50 seems a trifle excessive.

Three weeks later: In a Brighton bookshop's glass case, I spot Katherine Mansfield's *In a German Pension*; it looks remarkably like the copy I sold. The assistant opens the case and stands over me whilst I inspect it. I nearly fall down with shock when I realise it *is* the same copy, and they've priced it at £1,600. The little bitch! I never even thought she was a dealer, and to think I had to pay for the dinner — but secretly I can see she's the girl for me. I ring her up and ask if I can come round on Sunday and discuss French letters. □

driffield is the author of the indispensable driff's Guide to Secondhand and Antiquarian Bookshops *(£6) and its fortnightly supplement of news, price-guides and special reports (90p).*

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FOOD

Florentine flavours

Anna Del Conte

TUSCANY IS THE HEART of Italy. This large region, situated in the centre of the peninsula, contributed more than any other to the reawakening of civilisation after the Dark Ages. That Florence would eventually become the region's capital was inevitable; it was ruled by the most powerful family of the Renaissance, the Medici.

It was from Florence that the elaborate cuisine of the period, together with the correct manner of entertaining, crossed the Alps to influence first France and then all other European courts. Directly responsible for this was a young girl of 14, Caterina de' Medici, who went to Fontainebleau in 1530 to marry the Dauphin, the future Henry II.

The greed of Caterina de' Medici, with her sumptuous menus, is not as a rule characteristic of today's Florentines; their foods is usually simple, its excellence relying on the use of first-class fresh ingredients. It is flavoured with scented wild herbs from the nearby hills and dressed with the fruity local olive oil.

Chicken, prepared in the simplest way, is a speciality: split open, flattened and grilled — *alla Diavola*. During the cooking the chicken is brushed with olive oil, using a sprig of rosemary. Rosemary is used to flavour all game, from tiny skylark to huge wild boar, of which the Tuscans are inordinately fond, and also to flavour *Arista alla Fiorentina*: roast loin of pork. *Arista* is served by tradition with beans; the Tuscans are so devoted to beans that they have been nicknamed *mangiafagioli* — bean eaters.

It is only the puddings that still show some of the elaboration that characterised the Medici cuisine. One such is *Zucotto*, a rich concoction of whipped cream studded with nuts and chocolate filling a case made of slices of Madeira cake moistened with brandy, maraschino and *rosolio*, a rose-flavoured liqueur. Mouth-watering as that may sound, the real significance of *Zucotto* to Florentines is its shape: it resembles the cupola of their cathedral, thus reminding them of the time when they led Europe in every field.

Pollo alla Cacciatora

Chicken with rosemary and vinegar

This dish is made in Tuscany and all over central Italy, and there are many versions of the recipe. This one requires very little olive oil, but that little must be the best (i.e. extra virgin) and the chicken must be a good fresh one. The amounts given below will serve four people.

60 ml (4 tbsp) wine vinegar
1 sprig of rosemary, about 7 cm (3 inches) long, chopped
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 fresh roasting chicken of about 1-1.25 kg (2-2½ lbs) cut into small joints
½ lemon
45 ml (3 tbsp) extra virgin olive oil

Put the vinegar into a glass, add 30 ml (2 tbsp) of water, the rosemary and salt and pepper. Leave aside while cooking the chicken.

Wash and dry the chicken pieces, rub with lemon and season with salt and pepper. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and, when hot, add the chicken pieces in a single layer. Cook, uncovered, over moderate heat for about 35 minutes until the meat is tender, turning the chicken over frequently during the cooking. By the end, the skin of the chicken should be golden brown and crisp.

When the chicken is cooked, pour over the vinegar infusion. Boil rapidly for 1 or 2 minutes while scraping the bottom of the pan with a metal spoon to release the cooking residue. Taste, adjust seasoning and serve.

You can cook the chicken in advance. Reheat it and pour the vinegar mixture over it before serving.

La Ribollita

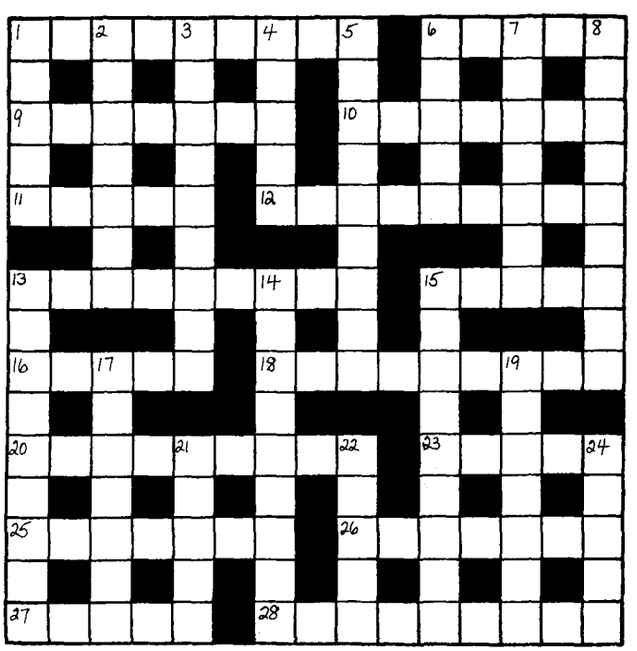
Tuscan bean soup

This soup is boiled again the day after it is made; *ribollita* means reboiled. It is the soup that is traditionally eaten on Fridays in the Tuscan countryside, since Friday is a meatless day and *ribollita* is made without meat- or bone-stock, only with vegetables. It can be made with a smaller quantity of beans, these being replaced with other seasonable vegetables. The amounts below are enough for six people.

200 g (7 oz) dried cannellini beans
150 ml (5 fl oz) extra virgin olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
4 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped
1 carrot, chopped
1 celery stick, chopped
2 leeks, very finely sliced
2 ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
1 sprig of fresh rosemary, chopped

Weekend Crossword 1539

PRIZE: £10 Book Token for the first correct solution opened. Entries to Crossword 1539, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU by first post 9 December.



Name_____

Address_____

_____

_____

ACROSS

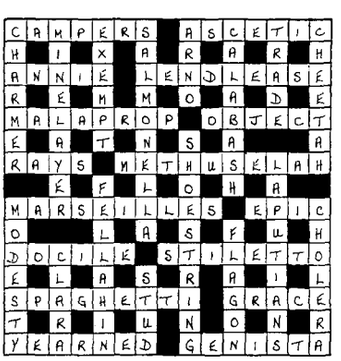
1. Prudence rose extraordinarily during the battle (9)
6. Points for clothing (5)
9. If the eccentric don lost his page he would be quicker (7)
10. Order a meal in Monty's place (7)
11. Prevent poets being translated (5)
12. Queer male in female attire undisturbed in bed (9)
13. Adult spoils and wastes away (9)
15. Fake something to eat (5)
16. Robin is in commercial radio (5)
18. Where it is not cool behind the trees (9)
20. Dirty sack turned into a means of measuring (9)
23. State in which the vote is taken during refreshments (5)
25. Seen in the garden when Lamb gets behind a high ball (7)
26. Briskly executed, with gore spit on everything (7)
27. Places for spectacles by the sound of it (5)
28. Surprise for one who raises lid? (9)

DOWN

1. Bob enters the festival as a clown (5)
2. Cook or duck in list (7)
3. Smoother for a novelist and what she wrote on (9)
4. Look embarrassed when injured (5)
5. Crossed with a line in unfinished business (9)
6. Opening for a man with a million (5)
7. Stipend prior to the change of direction (7)
8. Despatched without change of scene although getting on (9)
13. Shepherdess who discovers a silly ram gone astray (9)
14. Lifeless girl and I marry after one (9)
15. Player who makes opening blunder (5,4)
17. An animal about to steal is an agile one (7)
19. Figure which makes a man cross over a turn to the north (7)
21. Transactions held in universal esteem (5)
22. When this rogue is decapitated there is a place for him in church (5)
24. River suitable for a second trip (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1537



Prizewinner to 1537
David Lingard
(Sheffield)

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1 piece of dried red chilli
Salt
1 sprig of fresh thyme or ½ teaspoon dried thyme
Freshly ground black pepper
1 red onion, very finely sliced
6 slices of good quality crusty white bread

Soak the beans overnight. Drain and rinse them.

Choose a heavy stockpot, preferably earthenware, and put 2 tablespoons of the oil and the onions into it. Sauté for 1 minute, then add the carrot, celery, leeks, tomatoes, rosemary, chilli and 1 teaspoon of the garlic and sauté for about 10 minutes, stirring very frequently. Add the beans and turn them over and over in the oil. Cover with about 2 litres (3½ pints) of water, add salt and cook, covered, at the gentlest simmer for at least 2 hours, until the beans are very soft.

Lift out about half of the beans with a slotted spoon and purée them through a metal strainer or food mill. (A food processor is less satisfactory since the skin of the beans would be mashed too.) Return the purée to the soup, stir well and bring back to the simmer.

Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil in a small frying pan. Add the remaining garlic and the thyme, season with plenty of black pepper and sauté gently for about 2 minutes, stirring constantly and being very careful not to let the garlic burn. Mix this *soffritto* — sautéed mixture — into the soup. Taste and adjust seasoning.

Leave the soup until the next day. Unless the weather is very hot and damp, it does not need to be refrigerated: a cool room is best, but the kitchen will do.

The next day, heat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4. Scatter the sliced red onion over the soup and place in the oven for 30 minutes, until the onion is gold.

Rub the bread with the garlic and toast it under the hot grill. Place the bread in a soup terrine, or into individual soup bowls, and ladle the soup over it.

Weekend competition

No 2951 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

Samples, please, from *The Collected Poems of Princess Michael of Kent*, in which each line has been borrowed and slightly altered from a different poetic source — and including some of her favourite themes. Twelve lines maximum, for Wednesday 3 December.

No 2948 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

Comedy routines for the two Davids in the style of the two Ronnies.

Report **By Rose Dorn**

Tough one again, huh? Firstly, because the premise was doubtful: the two Ronnies aren't particularly funny; the two Davids aren't particularly serious. And then, like everybody else, you found it almost impossible to imagine what political content such a dialogue might have — apart from their little contretemps over Defence. So £8 each to these, brave efforts in the circumstances, and we'll try to make them easier in future. But if you think *our* comps are hard, reflect that 50 years ago this week, as civil war broke out in the BBC and the Hungarians marched into Suez, *NS* readers were asked to write a poem on 'Dejection' in the 'fashionably frivolous' style of surrealism. A week later it was *Times* correspondents in Berlin, Bangkok or Brighton on 'New Uses for a Swastika'. Having read the winner of that one (from Berlin, involving Jews and Belisha-beacons) I will never, ever, again accuse you of bad taste.

Scene: A public bar.
Owen: Evening. How's things with your lot, then?
Steel: Oh, we've been thinking about a new . . .
O: A new image?
S: No, not a new image, a new . . .
O: Jerusalem, is it?
S: No, no, a new . . .
O: Deal for the teachers?
S: No, not that. You know, a new . . .
O: New shirt with a matching collar?
S: No, a new whatsitsname, a new . . .
O: Leader? A new leader?
S: No, it's definitely not a new leader, It's a new . . .
O: Model army?
S: No, a nu-cle-ar policy, that's what it is. A nuclear policy.
O: Oh yes? I thought you had one.
S: I thought so too. Still, you've got to move with the times.
O: You know what, David? You'd be a natural for the social . . .
S: Whirl? The social whirl?
O: No, no, the social . . .
S: Democratic leadership?
O: No, not that. The social security, David, the social security.

NOEL PETTY

Owen: Good evening. In a packed programme tonight we talk to a man who peeped into a maternity ward and became a Labour Peer.
Steel: And we meet a man who crossed a racehorse with a parrot and got a Gallup Poll.
O: But first the news. The pound has had a bad day and is consequently in a filthy temper . . .
S: Having fallen to a new low of fourpence against the cowrie shell.
O: An all-night sitting on defence gave me de pain in de bum.
S: We've a sketch in which I throw a party . . .
O: And the party throws him.
S: Then there's one where we're both on a see-saw . . .
O: But God's on my side.
S: And you wonder why you can't get off the ground.
O: That's grassroots Liberalism for you. In the next sketch, I play the Prime Minister.
S: And I play the umpire.

ALISON PRINCE

Steel: So, you see, we agree on Defence.
Owen: Yes. We're sitting on Defence together.
S: That's good. Now, a lot of people ask me about feminism.
O: You mean, women's rights, David.
S: Shirley not, David. Women are central to the Alliance — not right, not left, but straight ahead.
O: We agree on that. It's fair shares for all; they make the tea and some of us drink the claret. That's how they get to drive the Volvo. But what about Black Sections, David?
S: We don't have any of them in the Liberal Party. We have enough trouble with the Welsh as it is.
O: Do you mean miners, David?
S: Well there are the Young Liberals. We were all young once. Tell me about the Young Social Democrats.
O: That's all of us, David. We're a young party. We're all young in the SDP.
S: That's enough about our policies, David. We don't want to confuse the electors. So it's 'goodbye' from me.
O: Its 'goodbye' for him alright.

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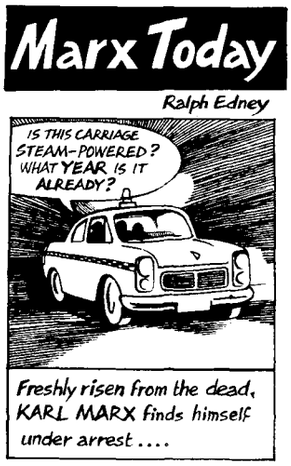
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Ralph Edney
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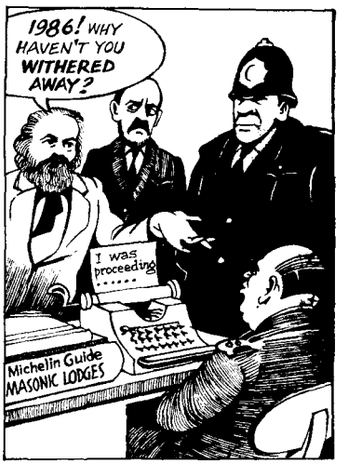
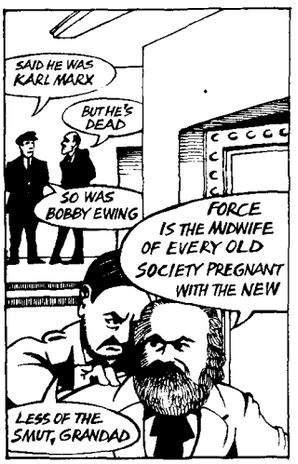
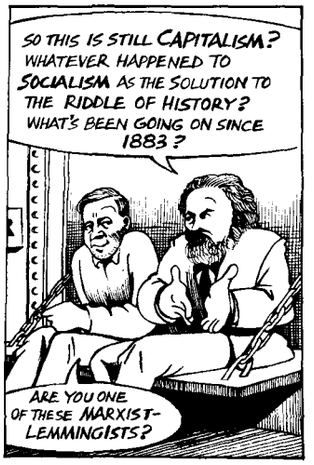
Freshly risen from the dead, KARL MARX finds himself under arrest ....




SAID HE WAS KARL MARX
BUT HE'S DEAD
SO WAS BOBBY EWING
FORCE IS THE MIDWIFE OF EVERY OLD SOCIETY PREGNANT WITH THE NEW
LESS OF THE SMUT, GRANDAD


SO THIS IS STILL CAPITALISM? WHATEVER HAPPENED TO SOCIALISM AS THE SOLUTION TO THE RIDDLE OF HISTORY? WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON SINCE 1883?
ARE YOU ONE OF THESE MARXIST-LEMMINGISTS?

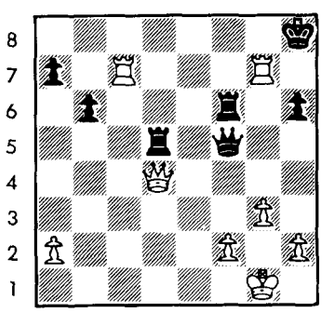
Chess

THE TWO LATEST titles Pergamon have added to their strong collection of translations from Russia and Eastern Europe contrast in a curious way. One, written by a veteran who admits to an unfortunate knack of 'snatching defeat from the jaws of victory', contains 120 charming games and relates the pleasures and traumas of a chess career spanning half a century. The other, with no game scores in it at all, concentrates on two matches, and in it the most dominant and successful of champions spits venom at the faction of a defeated rival.

The veteran is Laszlo Szabo of Hungary, a leading grandmaster of the 1950s and 1960s. He was in danger of becoming just a problematic piece of pronunciation to the current English-speaking generation, but I hope that now his *My Best Games of Chess* will encourage, as it will surely reward, a closer acquaintance. Since the days of Maroczy Hungarian chess has been distinguished for its artistry as well as its strength, and Szabo was an outstandingly stylish practitioner. He was also peculiarly accident-prone for a GM, the most notorious of his lapses being a game against Reshevsky in the 1952 Candidates Tournament in which the American left a simple mate in two on, but Szabo played something else and only drew. 'The spectators and other players looked at no one but me for along, long minutes. It was a horrifying feeling . . .'

In fact he had already made the worst blunder of his life in 1939. Naïvely accepting reassurances from the Hungarian Chess Federation that, although of Jewish extraction, he would be protected because he was a member of the team that had won the 1936 Olympiad in Munich, he returned to Hungary from Amsterdam. Within a few months he was conscripted into a forced labour unit.

This position, from Szabo-Dückstein, Wageningen 1957, is the setting for one of the many attractive combinations to be found in the book:



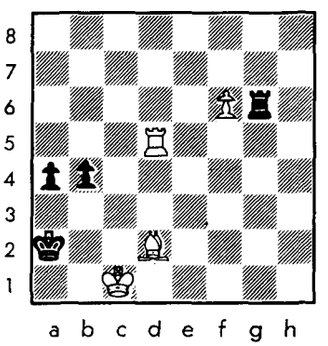
How can White (to play) best exploit the power of the Rooks on the seventh?

The other book is *From Baguio to Merano: The World Championship Matches of 1978 and 1981* by Karpov and Baturinsky. I think it should be conceded that Karpov has cause for complaint about the general pro-Korchnoi bias of the Western media, particularly during the disgracefully unsporting 1978 match. It is easy to understand why coverage was slanted in this way. The general public would not be interested in the chess itself, so if it was going to be a story at all it had to be this story: a tough individualist, sickened by the favouritism and fixing of the Soviet chess establishment, defects and sets out on a crusade to prove that he can beat Brezhnev's champion. As Karpov himself says, in this story 'only one tendency is apparent — antipathy to everything Soviet'. And in reply to his question 'But where does chess come into all this?' one can only observe that the whole business ceases to be newsworthy when it turns out that Rambo doesn't win on the chessboard.

Yet Karpov's version of affairs is an equally unpleasant distortion. For example, he conveniently omits to mention the situation of Korchnoi's wife and son and the Soviet boycott of tournaments in which Korchnoi was competing. Those who have admired Karpov's play will be dismayed at the absence of the faintest hint of magnanimity. Perhaps we have too much time for good losers, but very little for bad winners is more than enough.

Problem

White to play and win. Only an ingenious mating idea will do the trick.



Solutions

From the first diagram Szabo finished with **1. Rh7+ Kg8 2. Rcg7+ Kf8 3. Rxa7! Kg8 4. Rhg7+ Kh8** Or 4 . . . Kf8 5. Rg7+ ! Rxf7 6. Qh8. **5. Rg7!! 1-0.**

The second position is a 1939 study by Kasparian: **1. Bg5 b3 2. Rd2+ Ka1 3. f7!** 3. Be3 b2+ 4. Rxb2 Rxf6 5. Bd4 Rf1 + 6. Kc2 a3 7. Rb1++ Ka2 8. Rxf1 is *stalemate*. **Rxg5 4. f8=Q Rg1+ 5. Rd1 Rg2** Now Black threatens mate on both b2 and c2. **6. Qa3+ Ka2 7. Rd2! Rxa3 8. Rb2 Ra2 9. Ra1 mate.**

George Botterill

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☐ Mr Ingrams said he was annoyed that his name was spelt without an 's' in Mr Maxwell's complaining letter. 'Your pride was hurt, was it?' asked Mr Richard Hartley, QC, for Mr Maxwell. 'Not my pride, but I think less of a man who cannot get my name right,' he replied. Mr Hartley: 'You often refer to Mr Maxwell by other names?' 'That's different,' said Mr Ingrams. — Court report, *Daily Telegraph* (H. Woodward)

☐ A candid admission that British Rail does not look like getting there has appeared on the electronic information board at Charing Cross station. It reads: 'Will you please note that the "Next train to London Bridge" indicator is not working and will probably never work again unless someone knows how to repair it.' — *Daily Telegraph* (George Moor)

☐ A school kitchen made redundant by Bucks County Council's abolition of school meals is still to be built into a new Milton Keynes school — because it is too late to change the plans. The £1.8 million Walnut Three Middle School for 480 children has to be started early next year. And that leaves no time to alter the plans. It would cost an extra £30,000 to change them anyway, architect John Davis told the council's schools' sub committee. — *Milton Keynes Gazette* (George Lamb)

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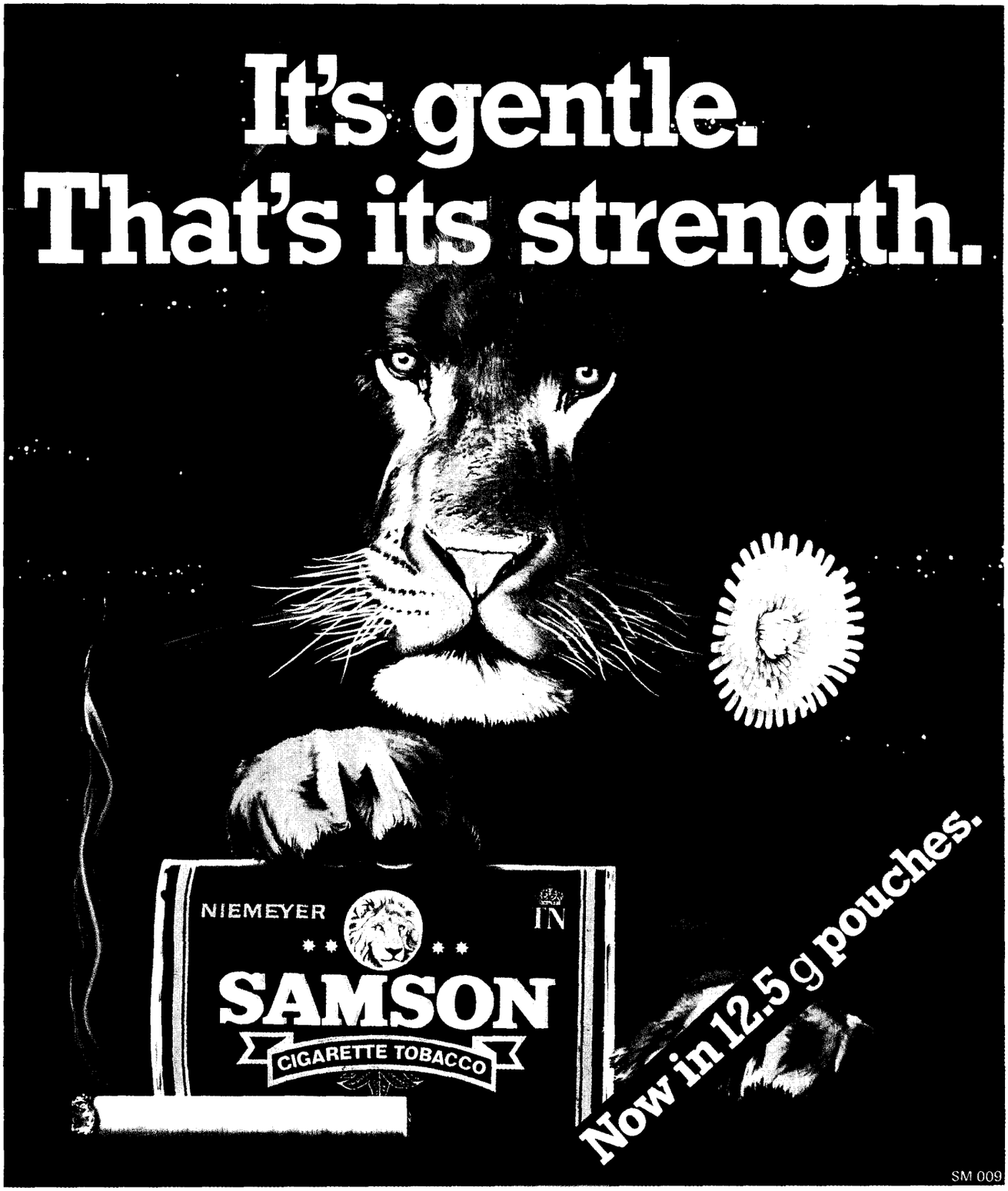

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